Strengthening the Chain of Accountability to Improve Quality and Performance in Ghanaian Primary Schools

"We know our rights of holding the teachers accountable … the children are our children and their downfall is our downfall…" *(Parent focal group discussion in LCD community, Kassena- Nankana, Upper East region, Ghana)*

**Link Community Development (LCD)
External Assessment**

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Acronyms

AD	Assistant Director
BECE	Basic Examination Certificate
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CBI	Cluster Based Inset
DEO	District Education Office
DEOC	District Education Oversight Committees
DDE	District Director of Education
DEPT	District Education Planning Team
EMIS	Education Monitoring and Information System
FGAR	Female Gross Admission Rate
FGER	Female Gross Enrolment Rate
GPI	Gender Parity Index
GAR	Gross Admission Rate
GER	Government Enrolment Rate
GES	Ghana Education Sector
HT	Head Teacher
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
KND	Kassena-Nankana District
LCD	Link Community Development
LPS	Link Program School
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PMT	Performance Monitoring Test
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
REP	Regional Education Performance
SMC	School Management Committee
SPAM	School Performance Appraisal
SPR	School Performance Review
SPIP	School Performance Improvement Plan
SIP	Schooling Improvement Plan
SMC	School Management Committee
TENI	Tackling Education Needs Inclusively
TLM	Teaching Learning Materials
TND	Talensi-Nabdam District
SBI	School Based INSET
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas

The Research Team

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Executive Summary

The Link Community Development (LCD) program has been operational in Ghana since 1999 and has gradually diversified its strategies and modified its approach to work directly with District Education Offices in improving accountability and quality of education in four deprived districts of the Upper East and Ashanti regions of Ghana. This evaluation attempts to investigate the outcomes and impact that LCD has made in two of its three focal districts in the Upper East Region—Talensi-Nabdam and Kassena-Nankana Districts. The evaluation uses a results-based approach by considering the overall goals, objectives and strategies which LCD has used to attain medium term outcomes and impact in the districts it works in. The study also looks at the cost effectiveness and sustainability of these strategies which have evolved in the districts.

LCD implements three main strategies: the Link School Programme (LSP) strategy which is targeted at Ghanaian primary schools which are linked with interested schools in the United Kingdom. This approach involves providing head teacher and School Management Committees (SMC's) with training in project and financial management, providing small matching grants to the schools and encouraging cross- cultural exchange with letters and sometimes visits by the teachers to the UK and vice versa. The second major strategy of LCD is the "insider out approach" whereby the program builds on the capacities, and attempts to enhance existing systems and structures of the District Education Office to deliver quality education services to the communities. The final strategy of LCD is the School Performance Review (SPR) process which has been implemented since 2005/06 in the Upper East Region and more recently in the Ashanti Region (BAK District). The SPR strategy involves several dimensions including assisting the District Education offices (DEOs) collect three sets of data to enhance their own understanding of the performance of the schools. The data collection involves: performance monitoring tests (PMTs) which are given to the P3 and P6 levels across all the schools, and education data collection focused mainly on quality using both quantitative and qualitative observation instruments. The data collection by the district is followed by a participatory monitoring meeting with the teachers and the community parents reviewing the findings from the data and then planning action based on the findings to improve child performance at the school.

These three strategies are used to improve quality education at the district and community level by engaging closely with the leadership and senior management of the District Education Office to bring about change in the performance of schools, teachers and children.

Methodology

The research design involved an in-depth investigation of two LCD districts: Talensi-Nabdam (TND) where LCD has been working since its creation in 2005 and Kassena-Nankana District (KND) where LCD has been working since its inception in 1999 but has attempted to scale down its activities over the last few years due to a lack of leadership

capacity in the district and need to move to new districts where the potential for change is greater.

The evaluation study covers three levels of investigation. Firstly the impact at the regional levels based on statistical and interview data from comparison of LCD focal districts with other non focal districts across the region was assessed. The second level of investigation was at the district level where extensive information audits and interviews were conducted with key senior management and operational staff at the District Education Offices to assess the outcomes and impact of the program. Head teachers and teacher workshops were also held to solicit views of key stakeholders across the evaluative focal districts. The final level of investigation was at the community school level where nine communities (5 LCD and 4 non LCD schools) over a two week period were visited in order to interview children, teachers and parents along with SMC and PTA members in order to solicit beneficiary views of the LCD interventions and impact. Comparisons were also undertaken by randomly selecting school communities which had received support from the LSP program and neighbouring community schools which had no LSP program but had been a part of the SPR process.

Teacher workshops were conducted during the two week field work phase in order to solicit interviews with a cross-section of teachers and head teachers from LCD and non LCD schools. A total of 15 head teachers and 24 teachers from LCD and non LCD from a variety of schools not included in the community visits were asked to attend. Fifteen schools were represented across the two districts. Six head teachers from TND with nine of their teachers attended the first series of workshops. Nine head teachers with 15 of their teachers attended the KND workshops.

Effectiveness of the Strategies

One of the key findings from the evaluation suggests that the SPR process is more effective in districts where there are strong educational leadership and management capacities at the District Education Office level. The reasons for this are based on the fact that the SPR itself assumes that accountability structures will begin to be put in place to answer and respond to demands generated from the information and processes stimulated by the performance monitoring testing and the school performance appraisal meetings held between teachers and community members related to their child's performance.

The LSP strategy using capacity building workshops for head teachers and PTA's along with the structures put in place to encourage project and financial management at the school level were enhancing the performance of PTAs and SMCs within LCD communities. Many of these head teachers were also found to continue good practices of school management once transferred to other non LCD schools. The training of head teachers and SMC chair people helped to forge closer ties and increased their understanding of their roles and how to improve child, teacher and school performance in their communities. There were several elements of the LSP process which helped to enhance the ownership and investment of the communities in the school; these included

the training and orientation of the community to fundraise in order to match LSP grants provided by Link over the past ten years. Most of these small school grants were able to assist the communities to increase their own investment in the school and at the same time help SMC's plan with the head teachers, interventions and actions which would help to solve immediate problems in the school. The school bank accounts also required the signatures of the SMC and PTA chairman which helped to ensure accountability and joint ownership of project activities.

The insider out approach was enhancing school quality and performance in districts which had evolved strong management structures of accountability, but the strategy had limitations in districts where the District Education Director's leadership was weak and performance structures for monitoring the key DEO staff (i.e. CSs) could not be put in place.   The insider out approach proved to be a dilemma for the team since the need to ensure accountability was both an outcome and approach of the LCD program.   The evaluation team concluded that other strategies should be added to the LCD insider out approach in districts which needed stronger leadership to put in place management structures to perform and ensure that the SPR process was successful. Some of these additional strategies include helping to strengthen the district education for All Teams (DEFATs) and District Education Oversight Committees (DEOCs) in districts which do not have strong leadership.

The ripple effects of the LCD program approaches were being felt across the non Link activity domain and across other schools in the districts. For instance, the Link head teachers who had been trained reported that they were more confident and better able to complete the current Government SPIP process in helping to receive the capitation grants for their schools. Circuit Supervisors confirmed that the heads of Link schools were more often able to plan for their SPIPs and involved teachers and community members in the process of developing their school SPIPs when compared to non LCD schools. Another difference was the fundraising approach which had spread in many of the LCD and non LCD schools across the districts.   Communities were finding innovative ways to fundraise and support their schools particularly in areas where school feeding programs were being phased out and the Government was unable to provide professionally trained teachers (e.g. Kassena-Nankana).

The evaluation also found that there was increased enrolment and retention in schools across the LCD intervention districts studied but with some decline in the recent years due to the pull out of major food incentive and feeding programs. The Link School Program was successful in motivating teachers and ensuring that there was some cross-cultural learning taking place in the school. The program also built the capacities of the head teacher to improve their project and financial management skills through training and application of their knowledge to the Link grants and special grants. The most significant outcome of the LSP program was the increased participation and investment of parents and community members in the LCD schools through the fundraising and awareness creation activities. This coupled with the SPR processes brought the school communities closer to the school and attracted key members of the community including

the SMC and PTA members to regularly monitor the school and take more ownership in school management.

The fundraising activities in the Talensi-Nabdam district coupled with the increased sensitization process from SPAM meetings increased the communities' ownership of the school and ensured their close monitoring of teachers which in turn increased contact hours and improved quality. The LCD grants themselves also resulted in communities and school management (head teachers) being able to identify and solve immediate problems at the school level (e.g. shortage of water, need for more TLMs and minor maintenance of the school); these changes helped to improve the quality of education and increase contact hours. For instance, the purchase of water buckets for drinking at the school meant the children did not have to carry water from long distances to the school. The provision of classroom cabinet's increase contact time for the teacher since they did not waste time getting the books from the head teachers' office.

The SPR process was also found to be more effective in the Talensi-Nabdam area compared to Kassena-Nankana due to the openness for change among senior management, and the service delivery orientation among district officers and teachers within the district. The PMT and ranking generated a competitive spirit among all the pupils, schools, head teachers and circuit supervisors and even the district staff in TND. The district staff has adopted schools to ensure that performance is improving through better quality supervision and monitoring.

 In the Kassena-Nankana District, the SPR process did not have the same results in promoting a "wind of educational quality change" among district and school level stakeholders. District stakeholders were not using the SPR as a key tool for holding CSs accountable nor track school performance as compared to the processes put in place to transform the system in TND. CSs were not being properly monitored nor made accountable for their actions. SMC's and PTA's were strong and had in many cases taken it upon themselves to hire their own volunteer teachers for primary schools which already had a full contingent of teachers-- some of whom were pupil and trained teachers. Parents and SMC members were concerned with the high rates of absenteeism among rural teachers who were living in the capital and were less focused on the performance of their children; the problem had been protracted for a very long time (over four years). Interviews with District officers and head teacher revealed that there were serious problem of teacher absenteeism, poor attitudes to work and mismanagement of the deployment of teachers which was a protracted problem, making effective teaching and learning almost impossible within several LCD and non LCD schools in the district.

One of the key indicators that the SPR process was effective in districts with strong leadership capabilities was the interest and demand generated in other districts across the Upper East who had District Directors of Education interested in improving quality learning outcomes in their districts. Interviews with two Directors of Education across the Upper East and the Regional Director himself demonstrated the value placed on LCD's technical support to the districts in the areas of improved performance monitoring and school management. The Bawku West District Director had implemented some the

strategies which the LCD had introduced but without any financial support from LCD (i.e. Senior Management Teams, Common terminal testing etc).

Sustainability and Cost Effectiveness

There was evidence that the SPR process would be sustained in the districts which had recognised the value of performance monitoring data to enhance accountability and performance systems from the bottom up through the demand by parents for better quality education. For instance, in Talensi-Nabdam and Bawku West both District Directors of Education were using terminal examinations as a means to tracking progress among children at the primary level. LCD support had enhanced their understanding and recognition of the power of using performance testing to hold their teachers, and Circuit Supervisors accountable for school performance. These directors were finding ways to finance the terminal common examinations by placing a fee for each child in the district. Less sustainable were the other aspects of the SPR data collection processes including the EMIS annex and quality observation data tools which did not appear well utilized at the district planning and supervisory levels. Several other management and accountability processes which were introduced and supported by LCD were taking root in the TND district: these included the need to fuel Circuit Supervisor motor bikes to ensure constant monitoring of the schools; more systematic reporting by the CSs to the DEO' offices and regular senior management meetings to review the overall problems and challenges in the district.

At the community level it appeared that the SPAM process was a successful aspect of concientising communities and parents concerning the performance of their schools and holding teachers and head teachers accountable. The TND district had continued the SPAM process by encouraging their heads to hold regular PTA meetings on a terminal basis to release information about child performance. There were also some indications that the enhanced capacity of the District Offices to generate the SPR reports was enhancing district performance monitoring but it was fragile due to the concentration of this capacity within a few EMIS/ statistics officers. The main weakness in relation to sustaining the SPR process was related to data /information management in order to ensure long term analysis and retrieval. Although District Offices were expected to store the main SPR data sets this was proving challenging since the infrastructure and process of proper data storage was limited. LCD should take more time to ensure proper storage and archival procedures are put in place for preserving this valuable data set.

The evaluation did find that the districts were beginning to finance specific aspects of the SPR program by themselves. Over the last year a significant portion of the SPR budget had been supported by the District Education Offices due to the financial constraints of LCD. For instance District Education Offices were financing the transport of their own staff to participate in the data collection exercise (fuelling and TNT) and providing logistical support in the generation of the instrumentation to be used during the exercise and after in order to generate the SPR reports for each school (e.g. paper and ink for printing). There was also evidence that the SPR process could be financed by the District Education Offices with minimal support by LCD if factored into their budgets and work

plan. Approximate costs of the SPR on a per school basis suggests that it cost approximately 10,000 Ghana cedis to cover about 50 schools within a district which included all aspects of SPR including the data collection and SPAM phase of the process.

Sustainability of the LSP strategy was also evident by the growing ability of SMC's and PTA's to fundraise and use their capitation grant for improving school performance. With the introduction of the capitation grant some schools were using the Link grant and the SPIP grant for the same purposes.

Lessons learned and recommendations

The evaluation found that the LCD work was very effective in complementing and enhancing accountability systems and in helping to improve school quality and performance in District Education Offices where leadership is in place to hold Circuit Supervisors accountable. Within the Talensi-Nabdam district where strong measures have been taken to ensure performance and accountability of district officers and teachers, the LCD approach was instrumental in improving quality and ensuring higher levels of performance among children. This was achieved through a variety of combined approaches such as:

- Strengthening of the SMTs and management structures at DEO level
- Stimulating effective measures for monitoring CS work at the district level
- Ensuring CSs were reported regularly on their work
- Strengthening community demand for quality education, involvement in monitoring performance of children, and holding teachers and heads accountable for their work
- Head teacher reports on absent and late teachers;
- Systematic and regular training of newly appointed head teachers and teachers;

The evaluation also suggests that more strategies and inputs are needed to build accountability beyond District Education Offices in order to hold top education management accountable in districts which are "non-performing". More LCD support is needed to build structures (e.g. DEFATs and DEOCs) which help to hold DEOs accountable for their performance and continue to strengthen the demand from the bottom at the same time. Additional strategies could include: the initiation and strengthening of the District Education Oversight Committee and at the bottom level more work is needed to bring the SMC's and PTA's into closer association for the purposes of information sharing and strengthening their power base to lobby at the district level (e.g. Civic Unions and District and Circuit based associations of SMCs and PTA's).

The evaluation team found that LCD was improving enrolment and retention particularly in Link schools where inputs and strategies for improving quality complemented the SPR approach of strengthening accountability mechanisms. Schools were becoming centres for community development and attracting parents since the provision of TLMs and small grants had made a difference in solving immediate school problems. The LCD support

had also strengthened SMC/PTA management and ownership through a combination of interventions including training, sensitization and fundraising.

Management structures and capabilities at the District Education Office were enhanced through a series of responsive support by LCD to both mentor and finance areas of need which eventually were taken up by Districts even non LCD districts (West Bawku and regional level). LCD was becoming recognized as an NGO with technical capacity to assist DEOs improve their management capabilities. Progressive DDE's across the Upper East were asking for LCD assistance to reengineer and improve their own district structures such as Senior Management Teams and putting in place CS accountability structures.

As a learning organization the collaboration between the VSO and LCD was helping to spread these best practices across the Upper East. Through the placement of VSO management officers and teacher support officers' best practices were gradually becoming embedded in the districts under review and other non LCD program districts.

The evaluation found that there is no question that the SPR process was an effective strategy for improving education quality across the districts in Ghana. The only limitation was in relation to where this strategy was best implemented; the strategy was based on best practice and was gradually being refined as a responsive tool with slight modifications depending on the technical capacities of the district. For instance, districts with strong statistical and analytical capacity were able to produce the SPR report themselves. However with those districts with weaker human resources other mechanisms were needed including more support by LCD staff themselves to both implement and produce the SPR reports for the district.

Child performance was gradually improving in the LCD and non LCD schools where strong leadership and accountability structures for CS performance had been put in place (e.g. TND). Educational quality improvement was evident where the SPR was in full force and well implemented. More work was needed to ensure that it was more fully embedded in the planning processes of Government and District Education Offices in order to maximize its impact. For instance, in future, LCD should ensure that circuit supervisors facilitate the production of circuit development plans which are used to develop the District Implementation Plan (DIP). The DIP should not be replaced by the Annual District Education Operational Plans (ADEOP) as the planning report for SPR since this may not reflect the needs at the community/school level and the findings of the SPIPs and SIPs in each school.

LCD has an opportunity to use a bottom up approach to planning which can eventually enhance the planning processes which are currently in place at the district and national levels including the DESP and ADEOP. What is needed is an interim approach to bottom up planning based on the SPR, SPAM process which can help districts develop their own DIP which can inform the ADEOP in future.

Recommendations

The LCD self assessment instrument for Organizational Development revealed that some systems are needed to ensure that LCD is able to continue to grow and sustain their efforts in relation to improving quality at district level:

- Urgent need to put in place information management system for LCD in order to preserve data at the school, district and national level which can be used over time and as a fall back to district information storage systems. Districts also need to enhance their abilities to ensure proper data storage, back up and retrieval systems in soft and hard copy.
- More infrastructure support is needed for MIS systems and data analysis systems for SPR at the LCD office and District office levels; as the project scales up the attention to computer infrastructural needs of districts requires more attention.
- There is the need to put in place better financial systems and hire a part time accountant in the UE and full time accounts person in southern Ghana.
- The strategic plan of LCD should include more fundraising strategies with a focus on core financing; at least one part time fundraising person for Ghana may be needed.
- Operational manuals related to SPR and capacity building processes should be refined and developed to help districts implement and take ownership of the processes.
- A more comprehensive system for lesson learning, monitoring and evaluation should be established by LCD in order to increase their own support to the districts. This could begin by using the District School Improvement Plans as the starting place for M and E systems.
- A program log framework and results based management framework needs to be developed in order to improve overall LCD monitoring and evaluation systems;
- MOUs with districts should be enhanced and pursued in districts which have not negotiated these in order to ensure sustainability and cost sharing arrangements are outlined.
- Procedures and guidelines for District Education Offices should be developed.

LCD has been in a learning mode for the last three years since the SPR was piloted in the Upper East Region. They have been capturing some of the lessons learned through staff meetings and annual consultations/reports but more team reflection is needed to ensure its sustainability and better strategic planning. There were several examples of how LCD has been refining its SPR approach and developing ways to allow districts to take more ownership and financing of the SPR. Some of these approaches which should be given priority include: the development of a District Bank Account for LCD work; the development of an SPR task force at district level to assist with the implementation; and an overall need for DEOs to begin costing the SPR process into their ongoing GES budgets.

As other programs begin to scale up the SPR process, LCD will have to carry out a management audit of its current staff and their roles and responsibilities. Currently the

SPR process will need to be scaled up in new districts and more staff will have to be trained on how to manage, implement and sustain this process. Scaling up will also require stronger systems for cost sharing between LCD and Districts to be put in place to ensure ownership.

Chapter 1: The Background

1.1 Overview of the Link Community Development Program

The Link Community Development (LCD) Program started its operations in the Upper East Region of northern Ghana in 1999 and the Ashanti Region in 2007/08. The overall aim of the LCD programme is to: "Improve the quality of teaching and learning in underprivileged Ghanaian schools so that disadvantaged pupils attain learning outcomes which compare favourably with the national average and thereby have better opportunities to improve their standard of living." The main of the LCD program was built on Link School Program (LSP), an approach to develop head teacher competencies and SMC strengthening through training workshops on financial and project management.   The other components of the Link program included a focus on encouraging community ownership of schools through fundraising activities and the school incentive grants. LCD learning from its Government partners and asking questions about the methods that could be most effective in supporting the improvement of quality teaching and learning revived the Performance Monitoring tests (PMT) and SPAM process and carried out the first of these PMTs and SPAMs in the Bolga district in 2004/05[1]. The Ghana program has scaled up to 71 Link schools across three program districts in the Upper East Region. Two of these three Districts selected for LCD intervention are among the 53 most deprived districts in the country.

LCD implements three main strategies in its work: the <u>Link School Program</u> (LSP) strategy targeted towards Ghanaian Primary schools which are then linked with interested schools in the UK. This approach involves providing head teacher and SMC training in project and financial management, providing small school incentive and encouraging cross- cultural exchange with letters and sometimes visits by the teachers to the UK and vice versa.   The second major strategy of LCD is the <u>"insider out approach"</u> whereby the program builds on the capacities, and attempts to enhance <u>existing</u> systems and structures of the District Education Office to deliver quality education services to their communities.   The final strategy of LCD is the <u>School Performance Review</u> (SPR) process which has been implemented since 2005/06 in the Upper East Region and more recently in the Ashanti Region (BAK District).   The SPR strategy involves several dimensions including assisting the DEOs collect three sets of data to enhance their own and the communities' understanding of school and child performance. It also involves assisting districts set up a systematic process of feedback and planning sessions using this data to increase the community and schools understanding of their performance results to bring about quality improvement.

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[1] The first roll out of the SPR involved using the comprehensive inspection instrumentation, PMT and Quality observation inspection at classroom level in order to ensure that the tools which were developed grew out of the existing approaches used at the district level to conduct school and classroom inspection.

1.2   Evaluative Approach and Objectives

This external evaluation attempts to look at the medium term outcomes of the LCD strategies at district, community/school and child level through a qualitative assessment of the main beneficiaries of LCD Ghana. The evaluation assesses the outputs, outcomes and potential long term impact of the LSP, SPR and capacity building processes set up at district, circuit and community levels to achieve impact. The external assessment uses a range of methods to solicit the views of stakeholders and beneficiaries (District Education Officers, teachers and community school leaders) along with children and their parents. A results based management (RBM) approach is used in assessing the inputs, outputs and outcomes over the last 5 years in two selected LCD focal districts in the Upper East Region. Field work involved the research team conducting in-depth investigations with key stakeholders in 5 LCD and 4 Non LCD schools across two districts in the north; focal group discussions and interviews with over 35 teachers and head teachers working in LCD and non LCD schools in these same districts.

The main objectives of the LCD external evaluation were to:

- *Assess the impact of the LCD's education work in northern Ghana – in terms of its contribution to enrolment, retention, and performance of children (particularly girls) in school.*

- *Assess the importance of the School Performance Review (SPR) and SPIPS as a tool for bringing about changes in educational quality in Northern Ghana.*

- *Assess the level of Community involvement in the management of education in the program.*
- *Assess the contribution of LCD's work in improving the management capabilities of GES at district level.*
- *Assess the degree to which the policies and approaches have been mainstreamed into existing government policies.*

- *Assess the degree of cost effectiveness and sustainability of the LCD approaches,*

- *Capture the lessons learnt by different stakeholders of the LCD program.*

- *Make recommendations for replicating and up scaling in TENI.*

1.3   Methodological approach

The research design involved an in-depth investigation of two LCD districts: Talensi-Nabdam where LCD has been working since its creation in 2005 and before this time when it was part of the Bolga District; and in Kassena-Nankana District where LCD has been working since its inception in 1999 but has attempted to scale down its activities.

The evaluation study covers three levels of investigation. Firstly the impact at the district and regional levels based on statistical and interview data from the comparison of LCD districts with other non LCD districts across the region was assessed. The second level of investigation was at the district level where extensive information audits and interviews were conducted with key senior management and operational staff at the District Education Offices. Head teachers and teacher workshops were also held to solicit views

of key education school stakeholders across the evaluative focal districts. The final level of investigation was at the community school level where nine communities over a two week period where 5 LCD and 4 non LCD school/ communities were visited in order to interview children, teachers and parents along with SMC and PTA members to solicit beneficiary views of the LCD interventions and impact. Comparisons were undertaken by randomly selecting school communities which had been direct beneficiaries of the Link LSP program and neighbouring community schools which were only involved in the School Performance Review (SPR).

The Research Team

The research team contained a wide diversity of educationalists including an educational sociologist, economist, educational planner and several teachers with experience in conducting qualitative and quantitative studies in education. The team also benefited from the participation of an organisational development specialist and district education officers who were involved in finance and early childhood education. All team members had a long experience in working with NGO's and educational change processes in deprived rural areas of Ghana.

Research Instruments

The team developed several instruments including a comprehensive field guide containing guiding questions for the <u>district level</u> stakeholders interviewed including interview schedules for:

- The District Director of Education
- The ADs of Supervision and the senior management team
- A focal group interview schedule for all Circuit Supervisors of the district
- A district information audit to take account of all the information collected during and after the SPR process
- An interview schedule for Circuit Supervisors.

The field guide also included instrumentation for other levels of the investigation at the regional, community and school levels which included:

- Focal group interview schedules for P5 and P6 girls and boys (who were interviewed separately)
- Focal group interview schedule for teachers
- In-depth interview with head teachers
- Focal group interview schedule for the School Management Committees (SMC's and PTAs)
- Focal group interview with parents
- School information audit instrument to record the quality of information available at the school level.
- Observation note guidelines for team to observe the school and changes as a result of the LSP incentive grant

A workshop guideline was also put together for focal group discussion and small group work with the head teachers and teacher workshops at the district level. The evaluation also involved extensive interviews and in house reviews of systems with the LCD staff at national and regional level in the Upper East Region. The LCD staff across Ghana filled out an in-depth self evaluation form focused on organizational development issues. A comprehensive documentation review was also included as part of the evaluation involving analysis of LCD monitoring reports to its donors and the external assessments related to the district and regional level performance appraisals by DEOs in the Upper East Region.

Several data sources were reviewed to analyse the impact of LCD at the school and district levels. Raw performance monitoring test (PMT) data from the two or three cycles of the School Performance Review (SPR) were reviewed. SPR data from a random selection of schools was also reviewed along with their School Performance Improvement Plans (SPIPs) and School Improvement Plans (SIPs) which form the basis of Link grant disbursement. Two other data sources were tapped to identify performance and enrolment information on the LCD impact at district and community/school levels; the BECE results for the last four years and EMIS enrolment data across the three LCD focal districts were analysed.

School Community Sampling

School community selection for field work in the nine selected communities across the two districts was based on random sampling from a list of all the Link/GES schools and non LCD schools which were in the same vicinity and circuit. The schools visited were usually within a one and a half hour drive from the district capitals in order to maximise time at the school levels. Approximately 5% of primary schools in the district were covered during the field work. Since the evaluation used a predominantly qualitative evaluative design at least one day was spent in each school to ensure an in-depth process of interviewing and data collection could be completed. The following table outlines the total number of schools in the district compared to the number of LCD schools.

District	Total number of schools	Link Schools
Kassena-Nankana District	100 primary schools	34
Talensi-Nabdam District	51 primary schools	19
Bolgatanga District	62 primary schools	18
Total primary schools	213	71

(Based on EMIS 2007 and LCD data)

Link was providing direct inputs through its LSP program to approximately 37% of primary schools across the three districts in the Upper East Region. All other schools were also receiving some LCD support through the SPR process and capacity building programs with the District Education Directorate. There were no new LCD schools added to the LSP program between 08/09 and 09/10. Approximately 6 of the 71 schools were considered "delinked" since they were no longer receiving correspondence or support from their UK partners.

1.4   Limitations of the Study

There were some limitations to the assessment particularly given the fact that the SPR process had only been implemented in two cycles over three years across the three districts in the Upper East where the evaluation took place. SPR data for the most recent SPR cycle (2008/09) was not fully analysed and therefore not available to the evaluation team. The evaluation team found that some of the SPR activities in this last cycle were still being completed due to lack of funding (e.g. SPAM meetings). The LCD assessment could therefore only look at the outputs and outcomes of SPR approach and not its long term impact.

Another limitation of the study was the inability of the evaluation team to use a comprehensive set of PMT data from both the LCD and Non LCD schools. There has been a reduction in the number of schools with some districts selecting only LCD schools one year and Non LCD schools the next year; comparative school data is not available particularly in the KND district for LCD and non LCD schools over the two cycles of SPR.

1.5   The Context of LCD's Work in the Upper East Region

The Talensi-Nabdam, Kassena-Nankana and Districts are among the most deprived areas of the country based on the Ministry of Education deprivation ranking. Apart from their educational ranking as three of the most "deprived" areas in terms of access to social services and educational delivery, they are also among districts which experience the highest incidence of poverty and experience high levels of infant and child mortality. The current Ghana Living Standards survey of 2008 (GLSS 5) places these districts and the region itself among the most food insecure areas of Ghana with a long "hunger" season lasting between six to eight months each year when one meal a day is all most families can afford. According to the Regional Education Performance report (2008/09) for the Upper East Region:

> *UER is particularly isolated and impoverished. Poverty incidence is 70.5% compared to the national average of 38.8% (GOG 2002), and increased substantially during the 1990s (Ghana Statistical Service 2001). The predominant livelihood is subsistence farming, and income is often seasonal. Many families struggle to meet basic needs at certain times of year. Basic education in UER is characterized by low pass rates especially in rural areas: many schools achieve extremely poor results in national tests[2]. Class sizes are large, and there are severe shortages of qualified teachers and learning materials, including textbooks. As a result of the recent introduction of Capitation Grants to schools, enrolment has increased immensely, putting pressure on the existing infrastructure.*

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[2] GES Performance Monitoring Test results, 2001

Performance Results in the Upper East Region

Despite their educational and socio-economic context, the LCD focal districts have improved in relation to BECE results over the last four years; Talensi-Nabdam district ranked third in the Northern Region for the last three years.   Other districts in the Upper East Region such as the Bawku West district have also been leading the deprived districts in their BECE ranking by attaining 60th position out of the 138 districts in the country. There are lessons to learn concerning the success factors in bringing about educational quality and transformation within a severe context of deprivation by looking at the change factors in the Upper East Region of Ghana.

Table 1: BECE Results across Selected Districts in the Upper East Region

District	2005	2006	2007	2008	Average	Annual Growth Rate
	% Pupils Ave 6-30	% Pupils Ave 6-30	% Pupils Ave 6-30	% Pupils Agg 6-30		
Talensi	44.5	46.1	59	53.7	50.8	6.5
Kassena	53	52.3	49	46.9	50.3	-4.0
Bolga	65	63.2	49	46.9	56	-10.3
Bawku West	42	57.1	44	65.3	52.1	15.8
Bongo	63	46.4	39	34.8	45.8	-17.9
Region	42.0	52.9	49.1	44	46.5	1.6

1.6   Talensi-Nabdam District Profile

One of the two districts used for the evaluation study was the Talensi-Nabdam District (TND) in the Upper East Region. TN District is a newly created district carved out of the former Bolgatanga district, now called Bolgatanga Municipality. It shares boundaries with the following districts: Bongo and Bolgatanga Municipality to the north; Bawku West District to the east and West Mamprusi district to the south. In terms of educational administration, the district is divided into eight circuits. The district education directorate has a professional staff of 30 as of 2009, 24 as of 2007 and non profession staff of 14. The District Education Director is responsible for 270 pre tertiary public schools. The district has a teaching population of 361 trained teachers and 374 untrained at the basic education level and 68 trained and 16 untrained Senior High School teachers (based on 2007 SPR Report).   There has been a steady increase in enrolment in the district over the last five years. See annex 2 for enrolment figures in the district details.

As part of the Ghanaian Government's attempt to create smaller and more manageable administrative units, some Districts and Municipalities were recently restructured. Bolgatanga District was divided into the Municipality and Talensi-Nabdam District

during 2005. Talensi-Nabdam was divided into eight circuits on its inauguration in September 2005. There are 59 primary schools in Bolgatanga Municipality and 49 primary schools in Talensi-Nabdam district.

1.7   Kassena-Nankana District Profile

The second district used in the evaluation was Kassena-Nankana District which is presently the largest district in the Upper East Region. It shares borders with Bolgatanga Municipality, Bulsa District, Sissala East in the Upper West Region and Burkina Faso. The district is divided into eleven educational circuits with each circuit headed by a Circuit Supervisor (CS). The district education directorate has a professional staff of 73 and non profession staff of 20 managing 198 pre-tertiary public schools (SPR 2007). The district has a teaching population of 1057 trained teachers and 351 untrained at the basic level and 135 trained and 1 untrained Senior High School teachers.

 The statistical trends for KND were as follows:
1. Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) increased from 97.3% in 2004 to 110% in 2005 and reduced to 103% in 2006/07
2. Female Gross Enrolment Rate (FGER) of 97.7% in 2004 increased to 102% in 2005 and remained at 102% in 2006.
3. Gender Parity Index (GPI) was 1.01 in 2004; this reduced to 0.88 in 2005 and increased to 0.99 in 2006.
4. Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR). This was 50:1 in 2004, increased to 53:1 in 2005 and reduced to 43:1 in 2006.
5. Pupil Textbook Ratio in 2004 was 0.9 and remained the same for 2005 and 2006.
6. The percentage of trained teachers in 2004 was 77; this reduced to 74% in 2005 and decreased further in 2006 to 68%.

These enrolment trends are presented in more detail in annex … .

Chapter 2: Key LCD Core Strategies and their objectives

The following section presents the three core strategies of LCD in more detail before moving on to their outputs and impact. The chapter outlines the Link School Program, School Performance Review Process and the Capacity building approaches used at the district, circuit and school levels. All of the LCD strategies and programs were reviewed as part of the LCD program evaluation. It was often very difficult for the team to differentiate and directly trace LCD support to the change processes which were occurring at the district, school and community levels. This was particularly due to the close interaction and interweaving of LCD's approach at the District Education Offices and the natural process of transformation taking place as the interventions of LCD were tightly connected and interwoven with ongoing processes of quality change and improved management at the district offices.

2.1   The Link School Program Strategy

The <u>Link School Program</u> (LSP) strategy is targeted at selected schools in each LCD focal district which are linked with schools in the UK. The LSP approach involves providing head teacher and School Management Committee training in areas of project and financial management, the provision of small incentive grants to the schools which raise funds and encouraging cross- cultural exchange with letters and sometimes visits by teachers to the UK. The overall objectives of the LSP program are to:
- Improve the school effectiveness so that schools operate as centres of learning and community development
- Strengthen the school management and governance systems
- Improve the head teacher professional development
- Facilitate mutually beneficial links between UK and Ghanaian schools

The Link Program School (LSP) approach also involves:
- Linking schools in the UK with schools in Ghana who agreed to provide support and cross cultural correspondence
- School partnerships framed around developmental processes of school development planning and fundraising on both sides
- Capacity building for head teachers and school management committee leaders
- School incentive grants and fundraising linked to planning for school improvement and quality education

The LSP program is being run in 71 schools in the Upper East Region and an additional 40 schools in the Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma (BAK) District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. There are a number of processes put in place to engage the SMC, Head teachers and school staff and pupils in the LSP program which include:
- School training and capacity building including lesson plan preparation
- School Development planning and auditing of school accounts
- Community fundraising and capacity building of the SMC's on their roles in the school

- Conditional grants for schools with planned projects
- School Partnership activities which include correspondence and exchange programs;
- Financial and Project Management training

2.2   School Performance Review (SPR) Process

"The School Performance Review (SPR) is a unique Monitoring and Evaluation approach to promote and consolidate the collection and management of information at school and district levels. It aims at providing accurate information about school performance to inform decision making to enhance the understanding of school improvement. SPR also provides the opportunity for LCD, GES/MOE, and Northern schools to have access to vital school improvement information."

After four years of implementing the LSP approach and under a new Ghana Program Manager, an added component of the LCD program was developed in 2003 based on well tested approaches which had been mainstreamed in the Ghana Education Service but not sustained. The initial stages of the School Performance Review process emerged as Link tailored its strategies and support to the needs of the districts. It also recognised the need to move away from a school focused approach to a capacity building approach targeted at improving school and child performance over the long term. The Performance testing of pupils had been implemented by the GES in the mid to late 1990s along with a participatory feedback mechanism known as the School Performance Appraisal Meeting (SPAM). This approach to performance testing and feedback was abandoned due to lack of Government support in the early 2000's with the last PMTs and SPAMs carried out in 2001.

The SPR approach was evolving in South Africa and Uganda and there were several cross country trips by the Ghana program manager to South Africa to study the initial model. Another trip by VSO volunteers from Uganda who were also evolving the model also helped to start the process in the Upper East Region. The initial SPR tools were developed through the exchange of ideas between the Ghana program manager and Educationalists visiting and testing out similar approaches in Uganda. Many of the initial instruments were also based on tools which were part of Ghana's school comprehensive assessment system.

There were several reasons why the SPR process was evolving in Africa including the need to use performance data to improve school and district performance, to strengthen the mechanisms of teacher accountability and to increase the participation/ownership of schools by the community. The following quotation summarises some of the main reasons why SPR was so important within the Ghanaian context:

*"District and Municipal Education Directorates in Ghana are unable to engage in effective school performance appraisal processes due to financial and technical constraints. Whilst lots of data is collected at school level, it is often sent straight back to Accra for national analysis or **left to gather dust in the district office**. Data*

*is rarely used to inform school and district planning, and even more **rarely fed back to schools so that stakeholders have information about their school's performance in relation to the** district **as a whole**. (SPR, 2006)"*

The <u>School Performance Review</u> (SPR) process designed under Link was piloted in 2004/05 and then began implementation in Bolga District in 2005/06, TNK (06/07), KND in 05/06 and more recently in the Ashanti Region (BAK District) (08/09). The SPR strategy involves several dimensions including assisting the DEOs collect three sets of data to enhance their own and the communities understanding of the performance of the schools. The data collection involves performance monitoring tests which are given to the P3 and P6 levels across all the schools, education data collection using both quantitative and qualitative instruments. The data collection is followed by a participatory monitoring meeting with the teachers and the parents to review the findings from the data and then plan actions based on these findings to improve child performance at the school. The following diagram describes the SPR process
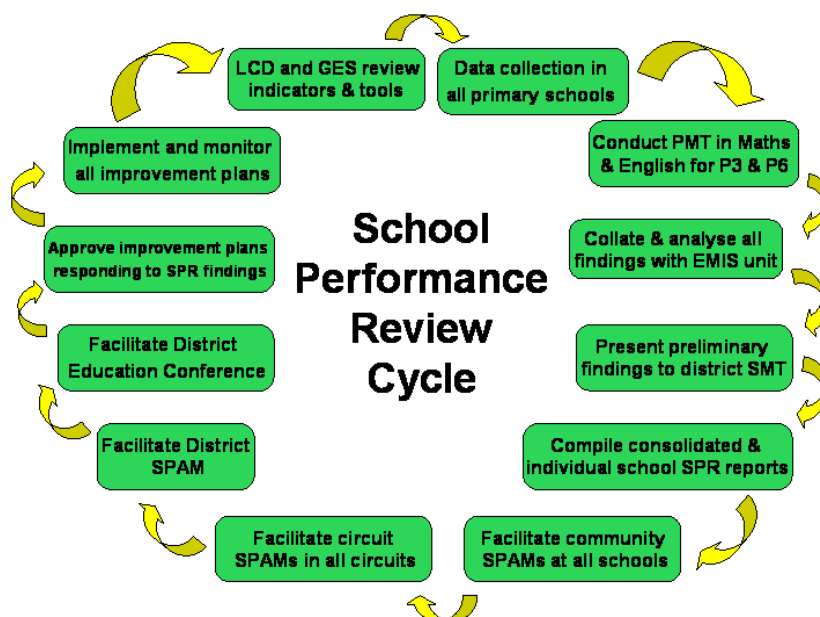
Figure 1: School Performance Review Cycle

Since the mid 2000's, the program has expanded to districts in the Brong Ahafo Region with growing demand for SPR intervention within Ghana and among countries in Africa (Uganda and Ethiopia). Districts in the Upper East, Ashanti and Brong Ahafo regions have been requesting support to launch SPR and similar processes to improve quality and strengthen accountability within the education system.

2.3   The Insider Out Approach and Capacity Building at District levels

 The third major strategy of LCD involves the "insider out approach" whereby the program builds on the capacities of the district education office and attempts to enhance existing systems and structures of the District Education Office to deliver quality education services to their communities.

LCD based its approach on building capacity at District Education Office level in order to improve service delivery and enhance quality education at the school community level. The LCD approach was designed to reactivate and rekindle some of the existing tools and systems which had been dormant at the district and circuit level such as comprehensive school assessment and consultative processes of planning school improvement with School Management Committees. The approach requires that all aspects of the chain of accountability are activated including all the Senior Management such as the Assistant Director of Supervision, Assistant Director for Human Resource Development, the District Planner and Statistics officer along with other senior officers. The accountability chain also includes improving the quality of supervision and monitoring by Circuit Supervisors within the district and ensuring that they are responsive to the needs of their schools and communities.

The basis of the approach is built on the following assumptions that, *"unless district staff are able to provide coordination services, support and monitoring to schools, education improvement will be limited. Strong management and effective supervision are integral parts of improving learner performance.* Finally, Circuit Supervisors are positioned to help manage and support school improvement; empowering them to fulfil their jobs is crucial for improving district services to schools. The LCD model demands the creation of effective localized support bases for schools through the following capacity building mechanisms (*(LCD PowerPoint on District insider's model)"*:
- Professional development of Circuit Supervisors (CSs)
- Creating space for the CS to share experiences
- Enhanced EMIS and performance data which is accessible to the CS
- Circuit plans based on school needs and which inform district education plans
- Circuit reports which inform district decision making
- The Appraisal of CS performance and impact on school improvement

In short, there is an enhanced school support system and CS activities have become part of a cycle of school improvement rather than isolated events.
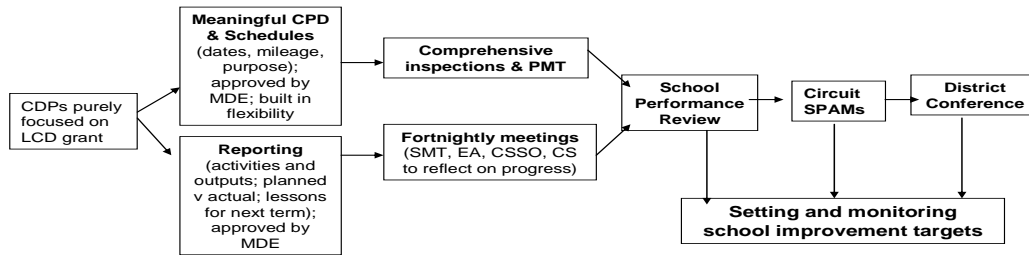
Since 2006/7 Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) Ghana entered a partnership with the LCD program to improve quality and accountability at the district education level. The VSO LCD partnership has involved support to three types of officers which help to build the capacities of the District Education Directorate: Circuit Supervisor Support Officers, Education Advisors and Teacher Support Officers who build capacity of the District Directorate and the strengthen management systems and teacher instructional practice. LCD and VSO partnership has included the placement of over three VSO volunteers as LCD officers at Bolgatanga Municipal office and two VSO volunteers at the Talensi-Nabdam District office.

Finally, another key component of the LCD approach within districts involved them being responsive to the financial and human resourcing needs of the district education directorate. LCD provided financial and training support to the districts when the needs arose. This involved both LCD planned training events and support to the district to carry out their own capacity building programs in areas where they saw fit. More detail of the capacity building support provided by LCD to the districts is contained in Chapter 4 on the District Interventions and Outcomes.

Chapter 3:   Inputs and Outputs of the LCD Program

This chapter reviews the key inputs and outputs of the LCD program by first looking at the inputs related to the School Performance Review (SPR) and then considering the outputs from the Link School Program (LSP). Other inputs at the district level which were part of ongoing Link Community Development support under the District Education Program (DEPP) are also taken into account where possible. These reflect ongoing support to the districts for special initiatives they defined on an ongoing basis such as in-service training for teachers and Circuit Supervisor support for monitoring and supervision of schools.

3.1   The School Performance Review Inputs and Outputs

One of the important LCD interventions is to give support to districts to conduct data collection exercises in several of their primary schools. Over the years LCD has focused this exercise on covering at least half of the total primary schools in any one target district in order to ensure quality and based on the financial resource constraints of the program.   The exercise includes collecting data which supplements the MOE's own EMIS or school census collection exercise and involves more qualitative measures in which to investigate quality at the school level through the observation of teaching instruction. The Teaching and Learning observation instrument involves three observation exercises at each school level. The data collection exercise is an intensive process which can take up to two weeks for District Education Officials to conduct and is often at the end of each academic year. The results of these exercises are processed and analysed at the district level with LCD support. The following table outlines the location of SPR programs over the last four years.

3.2   District Data Collection Exercises Conducted in Primary Schools across the three Upper East and BAK Districts

The SPR process was piloted in 2005/06 in Bolga and fully implemented in 2006/07 in KND and Bolga Districts at which time Talensi-Nabdam was still part of Bolga district. The next year (2007/08) the SPR process was implemented in three of the LCD districts including the newly created Talensi-Nabdam District (see table below).   This last year the process has taken place across the three LCD focal districts (08/09) but due to lack of funding the release of the data and SPAMs were delayed and took place in December 2008.

The first year that Kassena-Nankana ran the SPR process in 2007/08, the district decided to test mainly the LCD schools. The next year they included the other non LCD schools in the SPR process (2008/09). The Talensi-Nabdam district selected Link and non LCD schools the first year (06/07) and another 24 schools the next year of the SPR (2007/08). BAK randomly selected 50 out of the 100 schools each year they ran the SPR process.

Table 2: Districts SPR process in last four years

	2005/06		2006/07		2007/08		2008/09	
	Primary schools involved in data collection	Total number of primary schools	Primary schools involved in data collection	Total number of primary schools	Primary schools involved in data collection	Total number of primary schools		
Bolga	Piloting work		59	59			64	64
Kassena-Nankana					49	100	50	100
Talensi-Nabdam			24	49	24	50		
BAK					50	101	50	101
Total schools			83	108	123	251	164	265

Selection of schools to be included in the SPR process was carried out by the District Education Office and often stratified by circuit. Initially many of the schools were also involved in the MOE's Whole School Development Program. Schools selected included a combination of deprived and non-deprived schools within the districts. LCD also recognised that some of its initially selected Link Schools may not be any longer considered "deprived" since they are located in the regional and district capitals of the Upper East Region.

Another major challenge in implementing teethe SPR exercise across all the schools in a given district has been the financial resourcing constraints of LCD over the last few years and their desire to scale up. Funding limitations also restricted LCD's ability to reach all the schools across the 3 districts. This has limited the number of schools covered by the SPR cycle to half the schools and has limited the comparison which could be done between LCD and non LCD schools.

3.3 Performance Monitoring Test in Maths and English for P3 and P6 across the LCD Districts

The Performance Monitoring Test (PMT) is usually conducted in P3 and P6 classes across all the selected schools during the last week of the last school term (late July and early August). It is often administered over a three day period. The PMT forms part of the SPR process and is administered and designed by District Education Office staff including 8 to 10 professional DEO staff members and sometimes teachers who are recruited from the JSS level. The marking of results also takes about one week and is usually conducted in August immediately after the PMT testing. Training workshops are conducted for CSs and other District Education officials who are involved in collecting the data for the PMT and SPR process.

The findings from the evaluation suggest that there was a clear improvement in the districts' ability to manage performance monitoring testing particularly in districts where recognition of the value of child achievement/ performance data was being generated. In both evaluative districts, officers explained that the SPR process had put them in a better position to conduct their own terminal district wide examination testing at the end of each term (e.g. Talensi-Nabdam). Talensi-Nabdam was also able to organise its own "PMT like tests" with teachers setting the questions and district officers administering and analysing the results of the common testing on a terminal basis.

3.4 LCD Support Provided to the EMIS/GES Unit

Another major input to the SPR process was the Link staff support to the EMIS unit, and to planning officers within the District Education Directorate. This support ranged from on the job training to formalised training for statistics officers in how to manage and analyse the SPR data set. In most cases LCD was able to take an arms length approach after the first year of the SPR process in assisting district planners and SPR teams with the data entry and analysis from the SPR process. LCD often helped the district statistics officers during the start up years of the SPR process, and then once they were familiar with the process LCD staff could monitor progress with less direct involvement in order to see if their training had been effective

Training was provided by LCD before and after the data collection phase of the SPR in order to prepare the team for the field collection and then assist them collate, analyse and write up the findings from the SPR process. The officers at the District Education office complained of not having enough training or professional development to properly handle the full SPR process alone although both officers had demonstrated in the last SPR cycle their ability to carry the process out with minimal inputs from LCD in the Talensi-Nabdam district but with much more intervention in the KN. This became particularly clear when considering the need for Management Information Systems training. One of the most difficult factors to predict has been the openness of the Planners/ EMIS officers to learning: in one district LCD found that the Planner/EMIS officer was capable and ready to learn how to manipulate and use the full SPR data set, whereas this was not the case in the next district (KND).

The outputs of this training were clear in the Talensi-Nabdam District where the Statistics and Planning officer was considered one of the best planners in the region and had gradually built capacity to deliver high quality analysis particularly in relation to the District Performance Reviews which often presented complex analysis of district problems in enrolment and performance. The District Education report for that district was the best evidence of the capacity which had been developed within the Planning Unit to deliver high quality outputs in an organised and timely fashion.

One LCD officer was primarily responsible for supporting the four LCD districts with their SPR data, and providing support to Planners / District EMIS officers over the course of the last four years. It was a challenge for one LCD officer to provide support to the four districts although only two or three were implementing the SPR process at any one

time. During the intensive SPR periods from April to August the LCD officer for SPR had to be in several places at the same time. As the program grows the SPR process will require more support as LCD begins to grow in scale.

Interviews with the current SPR officer for Link revealed that 10-15 additional districts could be supported to undertake their SPR processes with his support. The evaluation revealed that one SPR officer is probably able to support about 5 to 7 districts roll out their SPR provided the District education officers are open and have the time to learn. This will also depend on how familiar the District Education Office are with computerised systems of data analysis. More staffing for SPR support at district level will be needed as the program expands into new districts under the TENI or other LCD programming. The VSO management support officers can play a key role in assisting districts and their EMIS officers with the SPR process.

3.5   School Level SPR Reports Generated

On average each school is given six copies of the SPR report to be dispersed to the school community levels in order for SMC and PTA members and head teachers to review the findings for their school. Unfortunately many schools could not find their SPR reports. Most schools did not have a separate file for these reports, nor were SPR reports comprehensively filed at the District Education Office.

According to the District Education Offices, SPAMs have been conducted in all the schools across the three Upper East districts over the last three years. Each District Education team who conducts the SPAM is given the SPR reports for the school often a few days before the SPAM process begins. In 2008/09 the SPR reports were given to school heads at least one or two weeks before the SPAM was conducted in order for the Head and SMC to review the findings before the SPAM took place.

The only challenge encountered in the SPAM process was during the 08/09 SPR process, whereby the PMT data was generated very late and the SPR reports only went out to the schools in November. SPAMs were conducted in late November and December. Circuit SPAMs were also not conducted due to financial constrains in LCD. The delay of this information going to the schools meant that some schools did not conduct their SPAMs based on the 08/09 data. The exercise this year also demonstrated the advantage and need to analyse and present the data as quickly after the data collection exercise as possible.

3.6   Circuit based SPAMs Conducted across the Districts

Circuit SPAMs involved all the Upper East LCD staff including the SPR officer and the LCD project manager. SPAMs are also attended by the District Education Directorate officers (4), AD of Supervision, and the Circuit Supervisors. The SPAMs usually take place over a one week period. Circuit SPAMs also included members of the SMC and PTA along with the heads of the schools from across the circuit. These were very important meetings since they exposed the difference between schools within a given

district and resulted in the development of a Circuit development plan and Circuit SPIP. The SPAM process was also the beginning of the head teachers and circuit supervisor exposure to the problems and potential solutions at the circuit level before the district wide SPAM process. According to the District Evaluative Information Audit there was very little documentation from these circuit SPAMs available at the District Education Offices in TN and KND. Interviews with LCD suggest that the SPAMs are given verbal debriefing at the SMT meetings and the AD of Supervision provide reports on the SPAMs but limited evidence was available at either the LCD Bolga office or the District offices visited.

Table 3: District SPAMMS process in last three years

	06/07		07/08		08/09	
	Circuit SPAMS Covered	Total circuits in a district	Circuit SPAMS covered	Total circuits in a district	Circuit SPAMS covered	Total circuits in a district
Bolga	8	8			Not conducted yet	
Kassena-Nankana			10	10	Not conducted	
Talensi-Nabdam	8	8	8	8	Not conducted	
BAK			10	10		
Total	16	16	28	28		

Failure to hold circuit SPAMs in 08/09 reflected in the quality of the Circuit Supervisor monitoring activities with CS work plans mainly focused on recording their visits and not the overall school performance issues raised at the school SPAMs. The loss of some data related to PMT results, together with the lack of proper management of the SPR data at the district education office level was a major challenge for future impact assessment and school based monitoring of performance. The lack of data management at the district office had resulted in the inability of the evaluation team to review the degree to which schools were progressing over the years with the exception of using the PMT results for analysis.

Unfortunately, the PMT evaluative analysis could only be carried out in one of the two LCD districts due to the loss of data in the second district (KN). Much more work is needed to ensure that all the circuits produce a comprehensive report on their SPAMs, SPR data collection process and that the SPIPs are fed into a District wide report and used as a monitoring and evaluation tool for future reference.

There were very few records of minutes or reports taken of school/community SPAMs available at the district education office level in both TND and KND according to the AD of Supervision. Records were not well kept after the SPAM process.

3.7 District SPAMs

LCD staff interviewed told the evaluation team that responses from the district SPAM process are recorded and minutes are taken by officers of the district and then these are translated into a presentation for the District SPAM and then the EDUCONM. The district SPAM was described as a "more internal process to lay all the issues before the District Education Director". The EDUCON is more of a refined process which presents the issues to the public, the Regional Director of Education and other Heads of Departments in the region. *"District SPAMs are like a planning process of how to address the problems and the EDUCON showcases the ways the groups think about solving the problems. (LCD officers)."* The District SPAMs are attended by all the front line ADs and the CSs together with the DDE and selected representatives from schools and PTA's/SMCs.

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09
Bolga	----	One		Not yet completed
Kassena-Nankana	-----		One	One
Talensi-Nabdam	----	One	One	
BAK	----		One	One
Total		2	3	2

3.8 District Education Conferences (EDUCON)

There have been approximately three EDUCON held at the regional and national levels since the SPR process began, These EDUCON meetings have been well attended with a variety of actors including: Regional Directors of Education, District Directors of Education, District Assembly Representatives and other NGO's working in the districts. LCD has made efforts to disseminate the results of its findings widely and is growing in recognition as a service oriented NGO with technical education expertise to work with Government and other NGO's in a collaborative and open manner. The EDUCON has been an excellent example of how LCD has engaged with senior officials and brought grass roots problems of the community schools to the highest level of authority. The challenge remains to ensure follow up and action which is then generated by these EDUCON. It appears that in the districts and regions LCD and the DEO Senior Management Teams have to make more effort to continually monitor and track progress which has been agreed upon at the EDUCOM.. More reporting mechanisms and documentation from the circuit SPAMs upwards may support this process.

3.9 School Improvement Plans (SIPs)

Almost all the LCD schools visited had developed school SIPs based on SPAM meetings in the schools.   There was a special incentive for LCD schools to develop SIPs since these would be funded. The recent introduction of the capitation grant had also helped to motivate other non LCD schools to produce a school improvement plan. According to both Senior Management and staff at the two evaluation districts (TN and KN), LCD communities were in a better position to get their Government SPIPs approved since they had experience in developing them based on the LCD SIP process. Interviews with LCD and Non LCD head teachers across the district and observation of the LCD SPIPS and MOE SPIPs at the school level confirmed this.

LCD did not ask for communities to generate a SPIP in 08/09 due to the lack of funding on the part of the LCD program. The LCD office did not have a comprehensive copy of all the school and community based SIPs and SPIPs in its files. They had assisted the communities' type up some of their SPIPs and could retrieve soft copies but there was no comprehensive set of these documents at either the district or the LCD office levels. This had an impact on ongoing monitoring and evaluation efforts of LCD and DEOs to ensure that progress was being made at the district and school levels.

3.10 Monitoring Exercises to Track the Action on School Improvement Plans

LCD had set in motion an important monitoring mechanism at the circuit level which involved the CSs developing their circuit plans based on the needs of their schools and information generated through the SPR process. The financial support to Circuit Officers was clearly a major input by LCD and considered one of the most important contributions by some officers at the district level. The Directors in some cases also recognised that the morale of their officers had improved and they were now able to monitor their schools on a regular basis and with more professionalism due to the approaches and tools introduced through LCD support.

More work was needed by the Director of Education and AD of Supervision to ensure that even after LCD stopped supporting district CSs through the "fuel money" they would continue to develop circuit monitoring plans reflective of the needs of the various schools and based on the SPAM consultations, and SIPs. The evaluation team found the lack of monitoring of the CS development plans to be a weak link in chain of accountability to track performance of schools in the districts. Talensi-Nabdam was the only district which mentioned that circuit supervisor reports include some degree of monitoring the school SIP implementation.

3.11　　　　Link School Program inputs and outputs

The next section reviews the inputs and outputs related to the 71 LCD schools in the districts of the Upper East Region which have direct support from the Link School Program (LSP).

3.12 LCD Grants over the Last Six Years

Link had made efforts to provide all their schools with grants which ranged from between 200 to 300 Ghana cedis as a "conditional grant" based on the community raising matching funds for their grants. Most communities within the LSP program were raising matching funds through innovative approaches which will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Table 4: Number of schools receiving Conditional LCD Grants in the Upper East region

	2003/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09
Bolga		18	18	18	18	No grants
Kassena-Nankana		34	34	34	34	No grants
Talensi-Nabdam		19	19	19	19	No grants
BAK					40	
Cost of grant per school		2,000,000[3]	3,000,000	2,000,000	1,000,000	
Amount required by the community		200,000[4]	200,000	500,000	500,000	

During the 2004/05 year there were approximately 200,000 in old Ghana cedis given to schools; in 2005/06; LCD provided 300 new Ghana cedis to each community with the matching amount raised by each community at 200 new Ghana Cedis. LCD gradually increased the amount required for the conditional grant process fundraising efforts to 500 Ghana cedis and decreased its own contribution. This was another demonstration of gradually building capacity into the program and, due to the funding constraints of LCD, the communities were asked to take on more and more responsibility for their own development.

According to the DDE's, District Education Budget Officers and AD supervision there was very limited knowledge of the funds being release to LCD schools since the funds were released directly and not through the District Education Directorate accounts.

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[3] Old Ghana Cedis equivalent in today's terms approx. 200 US dollars.
[4] Equivalent in today's terms to 20 US dollars.

3.13 Community Schools Receiving Special Project Grants

LCD program schools receive support from their partner link schools in the UK for special projects that communities and schools made requests for. Some of these special project grant ideas were generated by UK teachers when they visited their Link schools. For instance, special grants were used to construct teacher bungalows in some Link Schools, as well as provide potable water through the construction of bore holes (Bagire) and feeding children. Grants ranged in costing from about 200 Ghana cedis to about 4,200 Ghana cedi.

In-service Training Exercises

Head teacher and SMC training was provided to the three LCD target districts in the Upper East Region on a regular basis. This training involved: lesson note preparation; how to manage the LCD grants; improved administrative management of schools; keeping financial records; and how to plan using a SPIP process. Head teacher and SMC training takes place across all the LCD schools at least once a year and usually involves the newly posted head teachers to LCD schools and the SMC chairman. The training resource materials were drawn from the Head Teacher Handbook. In-service training events also involved training of CSs and Assistant Directors of Supervision on their roles and responsibilities and how to improve the quality supervision at classroom and school levels. These trainings were based on the CS Handbook developed by the GES. Teachers spoke of the LCD supported in service training in the preparation of lesson notes, teaching learning materials and school management as another important input from the LCD program.

Unfortunately the LCD office does not have a comprehensive record of all the in-service training programs it has conducted over the last ten years at a district level. Interviews with the SMC's and PTAs' revealed that some SMC chairmen have participated in the HT and SMC training programs several times. Several other training exercises by LCD have supported CS staff to conduct cluster-based and school-based support training. A lot of other in-service training was also being provided by other donors and NGO's such as: the CRS QUEPS program and the JICA –cluster based (CBI) and school based inset (SBI) program. In-service training will have to be better coordinated among NGO's and external donors in order to avoid duplication.

3.14 Provision of Teaching Learning Materials to Schools

There was a variety of teaching learning materials provided to LCD schools through the LCD school grants and through the linkage generated by the LCD link schools in the UK. Over the last three years a new program called "Let's Read" was established encouraging the production of several teaching learning materials. A variety of TLMs was seen across the four LCD focal schools and was available in LCD schools. Interviews with teachers across the two evaluative districts indicated that the TLMs were very much appreciated however further instructions on how to use them was needed. More work was needed to track the numbers of TLM packages provided to schools across the districts particularly

given the fact that both the LCD grant and Government Capitation Grants were being used for teaching learning materials.

3.15   The Let's Read Programme

Another intervention which had been started in five schools across Talensi-Nabdam and ten schools in Kassena-Nankana District was the "Let's Read" program. This program was being supported by a LCD/VSO volunteer placement (CS support officer) at the Talensi-Nabdam district and provided support across the two districts to schools that had been trained in the methodology. The program was geared at providing pedagogic support in English phonic approaches to the kindergarten and lower primary levels. The LCD office had set up an impressive process of producing the materials and supplying schools in the districts.

Interviews with teachers from LCD and non LCD schools in the districts indicated that this was having a very positive impact on the teaching and learning process and capacity of their teachers to improve their instruction in reading. Head teacher interviews during evaluative workshops in both KN and TN indicated that there was a high demand for the program. The phonic based approach is a missing pillar in literacy instruction in Ghanaian schools and the "Let's Read" interventions in providing pedagogic support and teaching learning materials was making a positive impact. It also enabled the LCD program to reach out to non LCD schools using teaching methods which would improve the effectiveness of the school.

3.16   Planning, Monitoring and On Site Support to the Districts

The LCD senior management staff developed a yearly operational plan to identify key activities which will be carried out during the three terms of the year. The plan outlines work under the following areas: SPR, capacity building for districts and the insider out approach. Terminal monitoring reports are submitted to the Program Manager who then uses them as means to monitor the schools. Program Managers from the two regions involved are expected to submit these reports and incorporate the SPR activities within their reports. Work plans for the LCD offices are drawn up by each of the staff across the different regions.

What was not apparent was the approach taken to monitor the schools on a regular basis. Most of the visits were decided based on the activities which were being undertaken by the Districts (e.g. SMT meetings), and the roll out of the SPR process. Accordingly there was close supervision by the LCD staff during the intensive periods of the SPR process, but other activities which could help districts monitor their own performance after the SPR process need to be articulated.

3.17   Conclusion and Recommendations

Link is in a learning mode and has demonstrated from an output level of investigation systems are beginning to evolve at district and organisational level which can help LCD strategies begin to be sustained by District Education Offices and Assemblies.   The major strengths at the output level of performance appear to be in the level of rapport built by LCD through its continuous meetings with District Education Offices and the degree to which it has systematically implemented the SPR process with District involvement. There was evidence that LCD was advocating for some of the leadership problems experienced in the weaker districts at the regional and national levels. According to the director of LCD it takes at least five years to set up systems of accountability at District Offices and ensure that they were being sustained. This observation was confirmed by the District Directors of Education themselves.

One of the strategic adjustments for the program will be the implementation of a SPR Task Force team at the District Education Office to help conduct the SPR process and ensure sustainability of the process over the long run. More monitoring and evaluation systems are needed to track LCD/DEO outputs in relation to in-service training and distribution of teaching learning materials to properly assess the outputs in future.

There is a need for Link and VSO to consider engaging an Information Management Officer to assist all the LCD and TENI districts to better store and retrieve information from their data banks. Training on mechanisms for backing up and long term web based archival systems should be explored.

Chapter 4: Impact and Outcomes at the District and Circuit Education Level

"As reiterated last year, capacity building has been a core philosophy of LCD as it is undoubtedly a key condition for achieving sustainability. The Educational Management and Information Systems (EMIS) units have been established in all districts. This is to provide relevant data that will inform planning and eventually stimulate good capacity building. The SPR process has been conducted with the full partnership of the respective district directorates. The EMIS team in the education offices have become responsible for entering all data captured from the SPR Excel spreadsheet for analysis at school, circuit and district levels. LCD only provided technical support. In effect all individual school reports as well as circuit and district reports were managed from the district EMIS units. This year allowed the district EMIS team to fully manage the data. Resource persons were recruited to give additional training to build capacity and promote a more efficient use of data by district staff (LCD yearly monitoring report to British Lottery, 2008."

The evaluation team assessed the outcomes of the LCD programme in northern Ghana based on five key indicators. These included LCD's own articulation of its outcomes based on the DEP project document which involved:

- Improved supervision, planning and coordination to improve school performance;
- More effective planning, monitoring and reflection at district levels;
- Improved financial and project management skills at district and school levels;
- Enhanced human resource and district operational systems; and
- Improved capacity of the district office to initiate and deliver better quality and responsive services to the community schools.

The overall impact was measured using two major indicators:
- Improved quality of teaching and learning in underprivileged Ghanaian schools so that disadvantaged students attain outcomes which compare favourably with the national average and improve their standard of living; and
- Improved capacity of the DEO to deliver quality education.

At the Circuit level some of the impacts which were expected from the project were:
- Improved monitoring and supervision approach of CSs (higher quality of feedback);
- Improved teacher instruction and teacher performance at the school level (time on task); and
- Better learning outcomes for children.

4.1   LCD Involvement at the District Level

Link community Development (LCD)'s programme at district level started in Kassena-Nankana District (KND) in 2000 and Talensi-Nabdam District (TND) in 2004 to improve quality of education. This is to complement efforts of the MOE/GES to provide quality

education. Field work at the district directorate and community/school levels suggests that the LCD School Performance Review process has revived the accountability system in the delivery of education particularly in districts with strong leadership. Communities were sensitized on the value of formal education as a vehicle for socio-economic development and their roles in schooling improvement. In addition, there have been fundraising activities at the community level to ensure community time and material investment in education provision. This is to elicit community commitment resulting in enhanced accountability to community stakeholders (parents and children); and community stakeholders demanding better value for their educational investment. Education providers are now being confronted with the challenge of satisfying this demand with better quality of service. The evaluation revealed a degree of quality change being felt in some of the districts in the Upper East Region based on LCD interventions and best practices. LCD's approach of stimulating demand also required a reorganization of management and supervisory systems at DEO level to ensure that more efficient delivery of quality education to satisfy the demands of the stakeholders at the community level was made.

4.2 District Supervision, Planning and Coordination

Setting Up Management Structures of Accountability: DEOC and SMT

Several structures were put in place with the support of LCD to ensure the effective delivery of education services by the DEO. One of the significant outputs of the work by LCD is the establishment and functioning of Senior Management Team (SMTs) to provide a forum for coordination, ideas sharing, responsiveness to problems and monitoring of ongoing programmes.

The SMT was put in place in both TND and KND; members comprised of the District Director, four Frontline Assistant Directors (Supervision, Planning, Budget and Human Resources), the Girl Child Officer and other senior officers. Meetings were to be held monthly to discuss educational issues emanating from reports submitted by field officers and SPAM meetings. All Unit Heads are requested to highlight on various activities undertaken and level of progress made. The organization of SMT meetings are supported by the LCD in both financial and human resource terms. SMT meetings were separate from other usual staff meetings such as the Monday meeting in TND, where all staff are required to attend or the CS review meetings with the AD of Supervision. Findings from the field work and interviews with key DEO staff suggest that SMT meetings were a valuable structure for ensuring proper oversight to the supervisory and monitoring work of CSs and monitoring of other processes at the DEO office. The SMT meetings also assisted key district officers obtain valuable management information and empowered them to feel like real leaders at the district level. The TND SMT was regularly holding meetings while the KND SMT meetings were irregular since the Director was often absent. The SMT was also seen as a key vehicle for ensuring continuity of district education processes and to outlive any change of District Directors of Education. LCD was also planning to broaden governance and structures set up for the SPR process in order to broaden the involvement of district education officers in the rollout of the SPR

and ensure capacity was sustained even when key officers such as the Planning officer were changed.

More work was needed to ensure oversight of educational delivery at district level were in place (e.g. DEOC and DEFATs). There was some evidence that the DEOC was functional at the TND and LCD had been given the opportunity to adequately brief members of the DEOC on its programme and its outcomes in educational delivery in the district. This platform was not used to the same degree in KND where there was no evidence of a functioning DEOC. This further weakened the efforts of LCD in ensuring that the Directorate was more effective in its delivery. More work is needed by LCD to help reinvigorate and strengthen the DEOC given the vital role it plays particularly in weakly led districts. Pressure from the DEFAT may be an excellent mechanism for attempting to strengthen this structure along with the critical involvement of the District Chief Executive or District Coordinating Director.

Strengthening Supervision by CSs and Increased Systems of Accountability

The evaluation found that support through the insider out approach by LCD had improved and strengthened the supervision systems set up by the DDE's in one of the two districts where the evaluation was conducted. For instance in TND circuit work plans are based upon the SIP and the SPIP in order to follow up with the schools on their progress. The SIP is also used to monitor since it describes issues which are not financially supported and do not need budgetary support: teacher absenteeism, pupil absenteeism, non functionality of SMC/PTA, alcoholism on the part of teachers and heads, and poor preparation of lesson notes and delivery. What was missing is a monitoring system to see how far the communities are moving towards the targets that they established during the SPAMs.

The CS support given by LCD had improved the work planning process at the district levels and regular monitoring support to districts. LCD had been supporting the purchase of fuel for the motor bikes of CSs for the last five years; this has encouraged some DDE's to continue to support the funding of CSs with fuel after the LCD funds were no longer available since June 2008). In the case of TND the DDE makes it a priority that all CSs are provided with a minimum of 2 gallons of petrol per week. Even after the LCD funds stopped in 2008/09 the district still found it important to continue prioritizing fuel from their own resources.

LCD is using existing systems set up by the DDE to monitor Circuit Supervisors' performance although the district and circuit SPAMs through the SPR process do help to increase these mechanisms of ensuring better accountability of CS performance. The following table compares two LCD supported districts with varied degrees of leadership and management capabilities.

Table 5: Inter-District Comparison of School Monitoring Systems

Accountability Indicator	Talensi-Nabdam District	Kassena-Nankana District
CS are being monitored for the frequency and quality of their support to schools in the district	Weekly staff meetings with the DDE to present individual reports on their findings. Three schools allocated/assigned to specific professional staff to monitor in the districts. Regular SMT meetings for the front line ADs to present their reports on a monthly basis and indicate successes and any major problems. DDE regularly and randomly visits schools which keep the CSs focussed on performance. Each CS uses formal reporting formats from the CS handbook to report on all school visits and their findings of school visits. Evidence of CSs providing qualitative support to the schools through the usage of checking on teacher plans and exercises of students. Swapping of District Circuit Supervisors was a regular occurrence in the district so that each year new CSs were posted to the circuits.	Quarterly staff meetings using quarterly reporting format from the CSs to the AD supervision. Do not allocate schools to other professional staff… only the CS is solely responsible and AD Supervisor for a specific circuit and SMCs are told not to go directly to the Education Directorate. SMT meetings have been irregular since January 2009. The District Education Director is often absent from these meetings. DDE is preparing for retirement and has not been very active based on numerous interviews and this has had negative impact on the activity of the District Education Directorate Not much evidence at the school level of qualitative instruction support by the CSs (based on log book entries and several meetings with HT and teachers (focused on attendance and professional development of teachers). No evidence that this practice of improved CS monitoring was taking place.
Teachers are being monitored for their attendance and the quality of their delivery	Head teacher monthly reports to CSs and AD of Supervision on teacher attendance and reasons for absenteeism. Continued red line system in the teacher attendance registrar for late teachers. PTA /SMC training and meetings to make them aware of their role to monitor the schools on a regular basis, to track teacher attendance and quality of teaching…(pick exercise books and count the number of exercise in a term)---	This is not yet a practice in KND. Not seen and HT interviewed were not using this system. PTA/SMC are being handled very consciously; it appears there is mistrust between communities and teaching force in the rural communities in KND.

The outcomes of the two districts were evidently clear throughout the evaluation in relation to school and children performance; the district which had weaker leadership at the top management levels was not able to maximise the LCD support to produce significant change in its delivery of education to the school level. The following section outlines the key differences between the two and the impact this had on LCD programme outcomes.

4.3 Human Resources and District Operational Systems

Capacity Building of District Education Officers

One of LCD's main objectives is to strengthen the capacity of district education officers in improving the quality of education in the district. This was to meet the community demand for better quality education. There was also the need to build the capacity of the directorate to plan, coordinate, supervise and monitor education development in the district.

Several in-service training events and on site mentoring are used by LCD to strengthen especially the skills and capacities of the front line ADs along with other members of staff including the planning and statistics officers responsible for the implementation of the SPR. Performance reports for the Talensi-Nabdam District state that LCD had assisted the district strengthen their capacities by: "supporting all professional staff for monitoring, supervision and capacity building and helping regular meetings of senior management team (SMT) to evaluate the progress of work in the district."

Two major approaches were used by LCD to strengthen the capacity of district officers. LCD provides direct training to all the key professional staff at the district levels and sometimes focused training for CSs and the key front line ADs of Supervision in areas of school monitoring and supervision, inspection, and planning. LCD also supported districts to develop their own in-service training for teachers and staff in a variety of areas and they would provide the financing for training of untrained teachers. Districts spoke of the following training events which were supported through LCD:
- Orientation for Head teachers and teachers posted to new schools
- Circuit Supervisor training
- Full office staff training in ICT and other areas;

Another major approach adopted to strengthen senior management capacities was the usage of the School Management Teams (PMTs). LCD staff made efforts to attend most of the SMT meetings in the two evaluative districts visited. DDE's explained that these meetings were helping build a team spirit in the district and enhance coordination. The content of the meetings often included reports of progress work by the frontline managers and major challenges confronting people in their work. LCD saw these meetings as an opportunity to participate and learn more about the issues facing the district and to keep up progress in relation to the targets set at the district level.

At both TND and KND, training of officers had taken place. At the directorate level, intensive training has been given to Circuit Supervisors including Assistant Director in charge of supervision (head of the CSs). Topics covered during the training included: project planning and management, teacher supervision (including lesson notes planning, preparation and delivery, class management), records keeping and financial management. In addition, motorbikes of all circuit supervisors are provided with two (2) gallons of fuel per week to facilitate school visits and inspection. There were training at the school level to update the management and supervisory skills of Head teachers and pedagogical skills of teachers.

Although LCD had made strides in building the capacities of the district Circuit Supervisors, district education officers suggested that more oversight structures and training should be put in place to ensure their performance particularly in districts with weak senior management and leadership capacities (e.g. Kassena-Nankana). According to the Regional Director of Education yearly forums and other avenues are needed to share best practices in the Upper East Region to ensure strong accountability strategies are mainstreamed into even weak districts. This is to prepare an enabling environment to achieve results in using SPR approach (see recommendations section for more details of these approaches).

Strengthening EMIS Systems and Officers

Interviews with key statistical and planning staff at the District Education Office suggested that LCD had provided some on site support in data management and analysis to officers supporting the SPR process. As part of the SPR several officers at the district levels were trained on the use of SPR instruments in collecting data. A follow up training/ workshop was also organized by LCD to assist the officers analyze and write up their synthesized findings into formats which would then be used for developing the SPR reports. Interviews with district education officers indicate that this had built their capacities particularly in the areas of assessing quality improvement, school based performance and school effectiveness.

 A review of the instrumentation particularly the EMIS appendix and the teaching observation tools indicated that there were excellent instruments for assessing "quality" at the school level and should be better mainstreamed within the GES system[5]. Orientation in the usage of the EMIS appendix data is also a good complement to the more access oriented instrument developed by MOE and collected on a yearly basis by all schools. EMIS data collected by MOE deals mostly with enrolment, teachers, infrastructure and text books. The SPR data is more comprehensive; it facilitates School Performance Appraisal Meetings (SPAMs) and the preparation of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and the School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP).

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[5] Currently none of the three tools used by LCD are mainstreamed, however in the coming years could be considered as the PBME develops it system of school based score cards, school record keeping, and reporting.

Districts visited were able to generate their own SPR reports with varied support from LCD and often using very limited equipment (one computer in each district visited). The SPR reports were generated before the SPAMs were undertaken but data storage was a problem; reports were not backed up on the computer and over time some of the reports and data were lost due to computer breakdown.

Data Management at the District Level

One of the key evaluative indicators related to the outcome of effective planning and monitoring was the ability of the LCD to build the capacity of districts to manage and store their data. Since LCD's work was very much focussed on the degree to which districts were able to manage their data, a rigorous assessment of the District Education Office's ability to store and manage the data sets generated by the SPR process was assessed. The SPR process is based on extensive data collection and analysis to generate the SPR reports for SPAMs and EDUCON. The evaluation team found that the DEO staff were aware of the documents but their storage and retrieval presented a major challenge. Documents for school planning such as LCD SIP and SPIP (including LCD grant releases) have been mostly kept at school level. The DEOs in both districts had very few copies of pertinent documents available and those were haphazardly kept.

The findings suggest that the two District Education Offices were able to retrieve varying amounts of SPR data related to the performance monitoring process over the last (3 years). TND officers were able to retrieve and share data from two rounds of the PMT data (the SPR for 2006/07 and the SPR for 2007/08); however KND officers were only able to produce the most recent round of PMT data (2008/09). They had not properly stored or backed up the first round (2007/08) thereby losing valuable data[6].

Table 6: Data Availability, Usage and Outcomes

Talensi-Nabdam	PMT	EMIS Annex	Teacher Observation Data	PMT Ranking	SPAM Report at Circuit or District Level
Data Availability	Both years of the data sets were available (06/07 and 07/08)	Both years were available	Both rounds of SPRs were available in raw data form.	Was available for both years and was being used for the District SPAM and School and circuit SPAMs	No evidence of circuit SPAM reports and District SPAM reports available at the DEO office.
Usage and Outcomes	Used for ranking and school, district and circuit SPAM process	Used for monitoring and planning by the Planning officer.	DDE has used the teacher observation data for school supervision and inspection to meet teacher needs.	This has generated a competitive spirit in the district; supervision and inspection of schools has thereby increased	

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[6] What were left were a few PMT results in English for P3.

Talensi-Nabdam	PMT	EMIS Annex	Teacher Observation Data	PMT Ranking	SPAM Report at Circuit or District Level
Kassena-Nankana Data Availability	2007/08 not available due to data loss and no backup. 2008/09 was available but not fully analysed	Raw data was available but not well kept.	Raw data was available but not well kept.	Ranking only available at KND for 08/09.	No evidence of circuit SPAM reports and District SPAM reports available at the DEO office.
Data Usage and Outcomes	Used for ranking and school, district and circuit SPAM process	No evidence of usage.	No evidence of usage.	Has generated competitive spirit at the school level but district level is stifling the community in demanding quality services.	

In TND data on teacher observation which was valuable for strategic planning and support to teachers to enhance their service delivery could not be found. In KND EMIS annex data was not well kept for ease of reference and retrieval.

Both districts had less data available related to the SPAM processes and limited evidence that they had kept copies of the SPIPs, and even the SIPs which were to be used for CS monitoring at the school level. In TND, some officers were able to produce a few copies of the SPIP reports which they have been using to monitor school progress toward SPIP targets but there was no overall process of filing of SPIP reports to track change within the schools over the last three years of LCD intervention.

LCD staff told the evaluation team that they relied mainly on the districts to store the data sets in order to build district capacity and ensure ownership of the data. They also explained that due to the limited space in the LCD Regional office in the Upper East Region, they have decided a few years ago not to keep hard copies of all the data and were relying on soft copies only but not backing up effectively. The findings from the evaluation reveal very limited and weak capacities on the part of DEOs for data retrieval in order to track quality improvement and learning outcomes in the long run. This limited the sustainability of the SPR process to inform future planning and performance monitoring exercises.

The evaluation process had helped the LCD staff in the Upper East Region recognise the importance of storing both hard and soft copies of all their data at the LCD office and at the District Education offices as a back up.

	SIPS	Link Grant SPIPs	Circuit Supervisor work plans	District EDUCOM
Talensi-Nabdam	Available for both cycles of SPR and being used to monitor by the CS's and other DEO officers.	Not available and returned after approval to the school level.	Was not available in the DEO but with circuit officers.	Available and used by District Director of Education, DEOC and the Planning Officer.
Kassena-Nankana	Available but limited evidence of usage for monitoring by CSs.	Were returned to the school for usage with only a few in the District Education Office.	Not well kept at the district offices and work schedule not really a plan with targets etc.	Available and used by Assistant Director Finance and Administration and Planner.

Consultation with LCD officers indicated that a systematic approach to data management was needed by LCD and the District offices to better manage the data generated from the SPR process. Unless a more stable system of data management is developed, this will have far reaching impact on LCD and the Regional offices' ability to track change and monitor performance of their districts over the long run.

Data Usage at the District Level and Performance Monitoring

Schools on average received 6 copies of the SPR reports on their schools once they were generated by District Education offices, and were often presented to the Head teachers before the SPAM process began. This allowed Head teachers to review the findings of the SPR before holding the SPAM meetings. Apart from the usage of the SPR data which was a rich data bank of valuable information concerning the performance of the schools, there were three major outcomes of the SPR process at district level:

- The ability of District Education Officers, SMT and Director to trace and rank performance of schools and identify strengths and weaknesses across schools in the district.
- This ranking helped the district monitor performance, nurture competition among schools and make decisions concerning the support schools needed in relation to in service training and supervision.
- Strengthening the accountability system.

There was evidence particularly in Talensi-Nabdam District that even through the SPR had been conducted two years ago, the process of generating performance monitoring data at the district level had allowed the entire senior management team to recognize the strengths and weaknesses in their supervision and monitoring system. The SPR had also stimulated a sense of competition at the school and circuit levels which heightened the need for supervision and onsite support by the CSs. The DDE used the PMT to rank the schools and provide feedback to the Circuit Supervisor and Head

In TND, the SPR process helped to enhance the performance of Circuit Supervisors and provide another strategy for assessing their performance where systems of supervision and monitoring were strong and where accountability systems had already been put in place. The District Education Directors also had various strategies to improve the quality of work among the CSs including: frequent SMT meetings, school performance ranking using common exam results (e.g. BECE, terminal tests, PMT etc), and continuous financial support for transportation. The school rankings were especially effective in creating a sense of competition among the circuits and schools to ensure pupils' performance was improved. The team work, information sharing and competitive spirit generated from the SPR and other testing approaches coupled with the increased performance of CSs and head teachers had a direct impact on learning outcomes in the district.

In districts like KND where the monitoring and supervisory systems for Circuit Supervisors were weak and where accountability at the higher senior management is weak (willingness to act against recalcitrant teachers was absent), the SPR process had been implemented under significant limitations. The latest district SPAM highlighted the challenges that the district faced due to lack of proper performance monitoring systems. Unlike TND, KND did not have effective strategies to ensure better monitoring and supervision of schools and of the District Plans. The SMT meetings were irregular, consequently information and responsibility sharing was limited. Follow up on Circuit Supervisor reports and performance were also not being collectively reviewed by a senior group of managers but were dependant on the CS for supervision. Key issues such as the deployment of teachers from the urban centres and teacher absenteeism was a protracted problem which lowered the moral of rural teachers and pointed to the disfunctionality of the DEO. The net result of inefficient operation of the SMT and a weak supervisory system was lowering the educational expectations of communities and limiting service delivery by the DEO.

District Ownership of the SPR Processes

The main outcome of the exercise - particularly the PMT exercise - was that districts had direct control and ownership of the information being generated, and the process and outputs from the process. The LCD approach of allowing the districts to lead on the SPR process had meant that they were able to organize their own SPRs in different forms and increasingly finance these events over the years. Since the first SPRs in the 2006/07 period, Talensi-Nabdam, Bolga and Kassena-Nankana districts have all been making significant contributions towards the ownership of the process; they have provided the fuel for their officers to collect the data and even produce the instruments which are used to collect the data and then given this data back in the form of the SPR reports. The following table maps out the movements in ownership of the SPR process over the last three years:

Table7: District Ownership of the SPR Process

District	Financing parts of the SPR process/making contributions	Placing the SPR or PMT in their district Education Plans and Budgets	Using their own approach to the SPR and the PMT at district levels
Talensi-Nabdam	Provision of paper and printing of data collection items and SPR reports (07/08) Provision of fuel by DEO for officers to conducted the SPR.	SPR and PMT not part of the Education Plan (ADEOP) and budgets.	Was designing and implementing common terminal examinations to track performance; Holding Head teacher meetings to discuss performance after the examinations and then asking HT to organize PTA/SMC meetings with community to discuss the findings at the school level.
Kassena-Nankana	Provision of paper and printing of data collection items and SPR reports (08/09) Provision of fuel by DEO for officers to conducted the SPR.	Limited attempt to integrate the SPR into the District Plans and Budget	Common mock exam for JSS final pupils at the request of the Regional Director.
Bolga	Supported the SPR process by printing data collection items and SPR reports (08/09. Fuel for officers conducting the SPR	The SPR is built into their DEO budget..	

4.4 Planning, and Monitoring at District Level

Another expected outcome by LCD at district level was the more effective planning and monitoring at district levels.

> *The MOE/GES have designed the Education Strategic Plan (2003-2015) as part of its planning system in order to improve educational delivery. The document establishes policy goals, objectives and various strategies coupled with expected outputs and outcomes. This long term plan is also reduced to a series of one year plans which also project into the coming three years medium term plan known as the Annual Education Sector Operational Plan (AESOP). Using the national plan, Districts are expected to develop their own District Education Strategic Plans over the long term and Annual District Education Operational Plans (ADEOP) for a year. For school based planning the School Improvement Plans (SIPs) were established and funded through the capitation grants from Government.*

Planning at District Level

Field work and the district education information audits which were carried out in the two districts suggest that circuit SPAMs are discussed at the District level SPAMs and EDUCOM conferences along with the SMT meetings. The team found little written data on the outcomes of the circuit SPAM in district offices. Circuit SPAM reports are written by the AD of Supervision or other senior officers at the DEO and findings are incorporated into the overall district SPAM presentations. The minutes of one circuit SPAM were available in each of the districts visited. No formalised report of circuit SPAMs was available.

The lack of reporting affected the degree to which an overall district implementation plan could be developed. LCD officers mentioned that the district ADEOP took the place of the District Implementation Plans (DIPs) but upon review of the ADEOP the team found that this document did not reflect the peculiar needs of the two districts visited. This was particularly so given that the data which was presented at the EDUCONS for the districts was not captured in the ADEOPs.

One of the weaknesses of the SPR cycle was that most of the districts do not have an ADEOP which reflects the key problems which emerged from the EDUCOM and the district SPAM. More care should be taken to ensure that a district report is generated from the circuit and district SPAM meetings. As LCD scales up to other districts a better system of circuit and district reporting will be needed to ensure that plans can be generated based on a district SPAM report. These reports could inform the ADEOPs in the district and better reflect the outcomes of these two important meetings. Currently the ADEOPs for both the TND and KND appear to have limited bearing on the process. The ADEOPs are mainly focused on achieving policy goals set at the national level and do not reflect the unique problems which are being faced at the district which the SPAM and EDUCOM meetings more clearly reflect.

Table 8: Problems Raised in the District SPAM Compared to Solutions in the ADEOP

	Some of the key problems identified in the TND EDUCOM generated from the SPAM	**Key solutions identified in the ADEOP for TND**
Problems by CSs	- Lateness and absenteeism of teachers - Failure to prepare work plans - Poor assessment of pupils work - Non commitment by some teachers - Ineffective SMC's/PTAs	- Provide 40 teachers with bicycles; - Provide teachers with gas cookers, TV's and fridges;
Head teacher resolutions	- Poor teacher attendance - Need to monitor and develop TLMs - Display the timetables in the offices	Procure and distribute TLMs
SMCs	- Dormant and ineffective SMC's and PTA's - Lack of interest in school performance - Lack of accommodation for teachers staying far away	Conduct Needs Survey for Prioritisation.

Recommendation: LCD should improve on the level of reporting and monitoring by District Education Offices by ensuring that a District Implementation Plan based on the findings from the circuit and District SPAMs are developed. DEOs should also ensure that they develop circuit and District SPAM reports which are internal document that can be used for the SMT meetings and to guide broader decision and development at the district education planning level when the District ADEOP is being developed. Currently the only outputs from the SPAM are the Power Point presentations developed for the EDUCOM and these are not readily available at the District Education Offices visited. More systematic and regular reporting is needed to capture the outcomes of the circuit and district level SPAMs.

4.5   Financial and Project Management Skills at District Levels

LCD was making progress in using its "insider approach" to be responsive to the needs of the district and developing the skills and capacities of some officers to better monitor and supervise at the school level. More work was needed to ensure that the insider mechanisms used by LCD also translated into financial management procedures at the district offices. There was no evidence of financial management support being improved at this level. More training of district budget and planning officers was needed to ensure that the SPAMs outcomes were translated into the ongoing district plans and that a full understanding of the SPR and LSP process was understood by all front line AD's and other key district officers. Budget officers across the three evaluative districts did not have knowledge of any LCD financial matters.

4.6   Regional Level Outcomes and Impact

One very positive outcomes of the SPR process is its inclusion into the regional and district level discussion; clearly LCD had made significant contributions at both the regional and district levels across their focal districts in helping planners at all levels recognize the important of performance data and use it as a means for assessing their education system performance. Discussion with directors across two LCD and two non-LCD districts as well as the Regional Director confirmed that LCD was making significant contributions towards helping directors analyze their situation. The District Director of Education of Bongo confirmed that LCD had made contributions towards assisting the region produce their performance reports etc. There was also evidence from the two evaluative districts that their performance reports and annual education operational plans had been enhanced due to the analytical work of the statistics and planning officers and their understanding of the problems of education in their districts.

The Regional Director in the Upper East Region suggested that LCD should focus its efforts on the less performing districts particularly when there was evidence that its strategies were being mainstreamed at the district education level such as the case of TND and even Bawku West due to the leadership and management capacities of the DDE's. He suggested that LCD should focus their attention more on weaker districts and spread their best practices by using regional review meetings with all the directors across

the region to share lessons learned and scale up their programmes on a yearly basis (this will be further discussed on the section on sustainability of programmes).

BECE Results Trend Analysis of LCD and non-LCD Districts

In evaluating the impact of the LCD programme, BECE results of three LCD districts (Bolga Municipality, TND and KND) and two non-LCD districts (Bawku West and Bongo) have been compared. Directors of Education across the UE often used the BECE as their main indicator for performance of their districts and pointed to the SPR as a process which was helping them to improve their performance. In analyzing the performance of the districts, the percentage of pupils gaining aggregate 6-30 was used. Individual district annual growth of percentage passes as well as averages over the four year period (2005 – 2008) has been considered.

Bolga Municipality had an overall BECE score of 65% in 2005 however recorded a downward trend registering 63.2% 2006 and 46.9% in 2008. The average score was 56 % with a negative annual growth rate of 10.3%. TND had a weak score of 44.5% but showed consistent improvement and performance growth with 46.1% in 2006, 59% in 2007 and 53.7% in 2008. The district registered an average of 50.9% with a growth rate of 6.5%. The strong performance of KND in 2005 with a score of 53% declined to 46.9% in 2008. The district recorded an average of 50.3% with a negative annual growth rate of 4.0%.

Bawku West which adopted some of the LCD strategies showed great inconsistency in their performance recording 42% in 2005, 57.1% in 2006, 44% in 2007 and 65.3% in 2008. The district registered an average of 52.1% with a strong annual growth rate of 15.8%. Bongo which has traces of LCD strategies in its operation had a score of 63% in 2005 but followed a downward trend with 46.4% in 2006, 39% in 2007 and 34.8% in 2008. The average performance over the four year period stands at 45.8% with an annual growth rate of negative 17.9%.

Generally, the Upper East Region shows marginal growth from 42% in 2005, 52.9% in 2006, 47.1% in 2007 to 44% in 2008. The average performance stands at 46.5% with an annual growth rate of 1.6%. Bawku West and TND reveal a strong positive performance growth.

4.7   Performance Monitoring Tests across the Districts

Table 9: PMT results for maths and English

DISTRICT	CLASS	2006		2007		2008	
		ENGLISH SCORE	MATHS SCORE	ENGLISH SCORE	MATHS SCORE	ENGLISH SCORE	MATHS SCORE
Bolga	P3	46.56	72.7			N/A	
	P6	88.6	72.3			N/A	
Kassena	P3			23.49	34.76	24.4	23.77
	P6			25.92	24.19	22.22	19.64
Talensi	P3	9.56	43.72	70.03	81.69		
	P6	35.11	31.55	63.14	61.33		

(Based on data provided from DEOs and LCD)

The performance monitoring test also showed a significant increase particularly in the TND compared to the KND over the two cycles of the SPR. The data for Bolga Municipality 2008/09 cycle was not available when the evaluative team was in the field.

4.7   Enrolment Trends (2001- 2007)

The LCD is currently operating in Bolga Municipality, TND and KND. With an exception of Bolga Municipality, KND and TND have experienced rapid annual enrolment growth ratio of 5.3% and 6.3% respectively. Bolga witnessed a negative growth rate of -3.9%. The negative growth was recorded in 2002 however improved in 2003 and 2004 before losing ground in 2005 and stabilizing in 2006 and 2007. It is significant to note that LCD initiated its operations in 2004 in TND. In KND the annual growth rate is estimated to be 5.2%. It had strong growth in 2002. There was a drop in 2003 but picked up strongly in 2004 and 2005 with a stagnated low growth in 2006 and 2007, as is shown in Table 7. It is significant to note that KND has had a longer timeframe of LCD intervention than the other two districts. LCD intervention on TND was initiated in 2004. Growth rate recorded between 2005 and 2007 stands at 6.3%.

Figure 2: GER for the three LCD districts in Upper East region

GER for Three Districts in Upper East Region

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Bolga	77.8%	75.6%	78.5%	80.6%	99.4%	102.0%	101.9%
Kassena-Nakana	98.20%	96.10%	94.70%	97.30%	107.73%	106.40%	106.20%
Talensi-Nabdam					76.30%	75.00%	81.80%
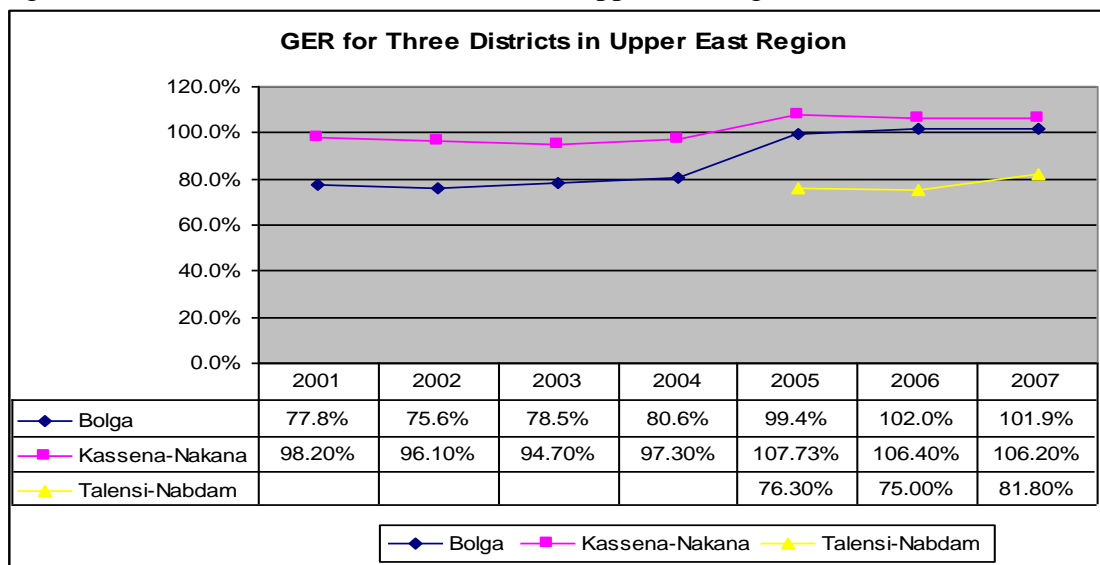
(Source: MOE EMIS data)

There has been a systematic annual growth from 8.4% to 12.1% despite the short gestation of the programme intervention in each district. Enrolment growth improved over the period and could have been influenced by the improvements in quality within the schools as a result of LCD interventions and other Donor / NGO supported programmes in the same districts (e.g. WFP, CRS, etc).

4.9 The Gender Parity Index across the LCD Intervention Districts

In the three LCD districts, Bolga Municipality, KND and TND, enrolment of children in schools has grown steadily with girl/boy ratio gravitating to parity. Bolga Municipality GPI of 0.93 in 2001 increased to 1.0 in 2005 but slightly dropped to 0.99 in 2007. It has a marginal growth of 1% over the period under review. In 2002 the annual percentage change of 5.3% is recorded. There is, however, a negative change of 1.9 and 1 in 2004 and 2005 respectively. It picks up again in 2006 with 2% but dropped to negative 1% in 2007

Table 10: Gender Parity Index (GPI)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Bolga	0.93	0.98	1.01	0.99	0.98	1.00	0.99
Kassena-Nankana	1.02	1.04	0.98	1.01	1.01	0.99	0.98
Talensi-Nabdam					1.03	1.04	0.98

(Based on MOE, EMIS data, 2001 to 2007)

In KND, GPI of 1.02 and 1.04 were recorded in 2001 and 2002 respectively. This growth has been sustained but it experienced a downward trend from 0.99 in 2006 to 0.98 in 2007. The highest negative annual percentage of 5.8 change is recorded in 2003 but it eases out to negative 2 and 1 in 2006 and 2007 respectively. The negative growth rate of

0.7 registered over the period under review is marginal. The district performance fluctuates between GPI of 1.02 and 0.99.

TND had a GPI fluctuating between 1.03 in 2004 and 0.98 in 2007 with a marginal negative growth of 2.5%. In 2006, the percentage annual change is pegged at 1.0%. In 2007 it dropped to a negative annual change of 5.8%. The table 10 indicates that all the three districts are on the threshold of attaining gender parity in the provision of education. In 2008 the three districts registered an average of 0.98. There is the need to strengthen advocacy particularly in relation to sustaining gender sensitive government policies in education.

Chapter 5: Community Level Outcomes and Impact

Community level outcomes and impact were judged based on the following key outcomes and indicators:

- Active participation of community members in schools development
- Community access to information and ability to demand for quality education
- Ability of the community to hold their teachers accountable
- Ownership of schools by communities

The ability of people to actively participate in school management was measured based on the knowledge of the SMC and PTA regarding their functions and right to quality education. The team also looked at the influence fundraising and financial management of the SMC and PTA had in relation to their level of participation and ownership of the schools. Finally, the team evaluated the degree to which the communities were holding their teachers accountable for pupils' performance and quality of education in the school. Some of the indicators included the level of monitoring by the community including number of school visits and the knowledge of their children's performance.

5.1 Community participation in school development

Knowledge of functions and right of SMC/PTA

LCD reported in interviews that it used the SPAM meetings and workshops for Head teachers and SMCs members as a means to educating the SMC and PTA on their roles and responsibilities. Across the majority of schools in both districts many of SMC/PTA's members interviewed had a good understanding of what was going on in the school. They were knowledgeable about the programmes and projects the schools were benefiting from and could list the support NGO's were providing. With regard to their functions, many including some of the newly elected SMC/PTAs knew their roles and responsibilities as SMC/PTAs. *"We know our rights to hold the teachers accountable; the children are our children, their downfall is our downfall" (SMC/PTA member, Atoa, KND).*

In Talensi-Nabdam District, the SMC chairpersons acknowledged that they were given training by the District Education Service on their functions and right as SMC/PTAs, and on school management. *"I attended a meeting in Kongo (a town in TND) and we were told that the school belongs to us. They said SMC should visit the school to check on the teachers and the pupil as well. If the teachers have problems, we should discuss them and support them to solve them. We should report teacher absenteeism, lateness, drunkenness and other immoral behaviours to the head and then to the circuit supper visor"* (SMC Chairman, Tarebora Primary). Some of the SMC's in both districts explained explicitly their role and narrated steps they have taken when a teacher is found to be absence, late or drunk. According to the Tarebora (LCD School) SMC chairman, when they have a problem with a teacher (because of absenteeism, lateness or drunkenness); they report the

teacher to the head, if there is no change, they call a meeting with the teacher and the head teacher and advice him/her. After three of these meetings if the teacher does not change then SMC will report him or her to the circuit supervisors. At Kassena-Nankana District, the SMC/PTAs said they had not received any training from LCD but the changes in SMC leaders could also be factor.

One thing was common to all the communities; they were highly sensitized about the value and their right to quality education. Field work suggested that they had been sensitized by the many NGOs that work in the communities and the schools across the districts.   NGOs including: World Vision, EQUALL, WFP, General Agricultural Workers Union (GAWU), CRS, and Action Aid were all active in the districts[7].   There were indications from interviews with community members and SMCs that they had some sensitization from other NGOs apart from Link on issues of community involvement in schooling. The Chief and SMC chairman of Sembu (Non Link) said that *"The NGO told us that we should lift it, if we cannot get it to our head then they will help us".*

Members of the communities who visited the schools usually report to their SMC/PTA chair and sometimes they would ask the head teacher when a teacher is absent or there is no teacher in class etc. *"When we visit the school and there is no teacher in a particular class, we ask the head teacher why that teacher is not in school or in class and that is all; what can we do again?" (Pualina, Tinga community, TND)*

Interviews with women in the community revealed that the SMC/PTAs executives were actually sensitized and empowered to help run the schools in their communities. However, some community members see the role of monitoring teachers as the responsibility of the SMC/PTA executives only. *"If you are not elected as a leader in the PTA, how can you visit the school to check on teacher attendance?"(Atampore, Alagba, KND).*

Fund raising and financial management

LCD was not only supporting fund raising efforts in the Link schools but also encouraging other schools in the district to undertake fundraising efforts as part of the overall school improvement process during SPAM meetings.   The LCD expected outcome at community level was improved financial and project management at school level.

All the Link schools were actively engaged in fund raising, which involved community members making contributions of farm produce, birds and animals during the harvesting season (October-November) to sell in a festival to raise money. Some communities also employed other innovative means depending on the environment and economy of the community such as picking stones and gathering fire wood to sell, working on farms for money, among others. The money raised was kept in a bank account which had the head teacher and the SMC or PTA chairperson as signatories. In these schools, the fund-

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[7] Refer to Annex 5 for full listing of NGO's operating in both TND and KND

raising was a requirement to qualify for the Link school grants. In 2007/08, Link required that the communities to raise a minimum of GH¢ 50.00 to qualify for school grant of GH¢ 100.00.

The SMC/PTA had a fairly good understanding of the Link grant process, requirements and how it was being used. In many schools visited, the grant was used for buying water containers for classes to maximize pupil-teacher contact time. SMC's also used the money for the repair of furniture, classroom blocks and purchasing books and teaching learning and materials.

The SMCs and PTAs interviewed were more knowledgeable about the LCD grant usage in comparison to the GES capitation grant due to several factors. LCD required that all SMC's were signatories to the Link bank account and involved in the planning process along with the HT from the SPAM to the SIP development. SMC/PTA members in five LCD visited across the two districts explained that the HT involved them in the planning of the Link grant. They stated that usually the head teacher with teachers identified the problems or needs of the school and called a joint meeting with the SMC. At these meetings they discuss the needs and problems of the school with the head teacher and agree on the way forward.. A budget is then and sent to Link for approval; after approval by LCD, the head teacher and SMC/PTA chairperson purchase the items and show the items to the community before they are used in the school.   This was in sharp contrast to the GES capitation grant which did not require full participation of the SMC/PTA and often did not even involve the teachers in the school.

The SMC/PTA chairpersons in the five LCD schools in both districts had tremendous knowledge of the Link grant and activities. They knew the amount raised at the fund raising event, the amount link gave the school and in some schools, the last time members withdraw from the Link account. However, some community members did not know about Link but they were aware of that some support was coming from outside the community. In an interview with women in Alagba primary, the women admitted that the SMC called a meeting to inform them when the LCD grant was disbursed to the school and that the money was in addition to the funds raised to help the school. At Bagire and Tarebora which are both link schools, community members referred to the support from Link as support from "our friends or whites".

The fundraising raising and the system of involving the SMC/PTA in the planning and spending the grant gave the SMC/PTA interest and power within the realm of school affairs. It also created confidence in the SMC/PTA members by increasing their involvement in the running of the school and holding the head teacher and teachers accountable. Community member's t also got involved enhancing their ownership of the school.

Impact of PMT, SPAM and SPR process at community level

The evaluation field work across the nine communities revealed that the PMT and SPAM process served as a participatory forum for the community and teachers to discuss problems take decisions and solve issues affecting the schools. In many of the Schools visited where PMTs and SPAMs were conducted, the results of the SPAM triggered follow up meetings aimed at addressing the problem identified in the SPAM. At Atoa, parents asserted that it was after the PMT and SPAM that they realised their children's reading performance was very poor. They convened a meeting with the teachers to discuss the SPAM results. The performance of teachers in the school, their absenteeism and lateness and its impact on child performance was scrutinized and the results of was the engagement of volunteer teachers from the community to teach in the school. The SMC also intensified their monitoring activities and subsequently reported the certain teachers which were known for absenteeism to the circuit superiors. At Ayaga, the results were the building of teacher quarters in an attempt to reduce teacher absenteeism and lateness and the continuation of feeding programme after CRS pulled out. At Anaanore, the SPAM process translated into the building of a JSS and the provision of a volunteer teacher by the community to assist in the school. At other schools, parents were reducing the domestic workload of their children in the house and in some cases stopping certain negative cultural practices such as early marriage.

5.2   Accountability at the School

Community Monitoring of Teachers

In all the nine schools visited the community members and SMC were engaged in some level of monitoring of teachers in the schools. In both Link and non-Link schools, SMC/PTA and community members were visiting schools to monitor their activities. However, seven LCD and Non-Link schools were very proactive in monitoring teachers and the other two had new SMC/PTAs who had just been elected to office and the Heads of the schools had also changed. This became a major factor in continuity and sustainability within the community for SPR and SPAM processes.

- In Sembu in the Kassena-Nankana District, the PTA/SMSC selected seven people to visit the school in turns; thus at least one member of the PTA/SMC visits the school each day. "*I usually come to the school around 10.00 am when they are supposed to be in class so if I found that the pupils are roaming or there is no teacher in a particular class, I ask the Head teacher*" (a member of the seven selected to monitor school at Sembu).
- In Tinga community in TND a parent said: "*Now the teachers attend school. My house is just by the road to the school, so I always sit on the rock and observe how many teachers come to school and I have realized that they now come to school. At first some three teachers were absent from school three consecutive days in a week but because the new Head teacher is hard working, the teachers attendance is now better* (Pok, Tinga community, TND).

Many of the schools in both districts have initiated actions against teachers who were non-performing as a consequence of alcoholism and absenteeism. These actions against teachers included transfers, suspension of salaries and freezing of salaries. According to the PTA/SMC of Sembu KND (non LCD school), they had an agreement with the teaching staff that whenever a staff had a genuine problem and could not come to school, the teacher should inform the Head teacher, so that they when the community members visit, the Head teacher can explain the absence of any teacher. Aside checking on teachers, they said they ask the Head teacher concerning any problems challenges the school is facing and the community or SMC/PTA can help to solve. They also talk to children and parents of children who are reported to be stubborn or truant. In Anaanore, Ameng-etgo and Ayaga primary schools in the Kassena-Nankana District, parents and the SMC/PTA were regularly visiting the schools and holding teachers accountable. They questioned teacher attendance and reported teacher absenteeism, alcoholism and lateness to the Head teacher and Circuit Supervisors.

At Tarebora primary (Link school in TND), the SMC/PTA actions led to the transfer of a drunken teacher from the school two years ago and currently there is another teacher who drinks and has been given his final warning. According to the SMC/PTA the teacher's behaviour has changed however "if he reverts back to his old habits, they will report him to the Circuit Supervisor and make sure he is transferred from the school". At Sembu, a similar action was taken a year ago which led to the teacher's salary being frozen and the teacher being transferred from the school.

Community members feel obliged to hold teachers and pupils accountable due to the level of investment in school in the form of building infrastructure, fundraising, provision for children etc. This coupled with the sensitisation processes by NGOs as to the communities' role in school; communities are resolute in demanding accountability in the schools.

- *"We thought that the school was for government; we did not buy books or pens for our children but we were made to understand that the school belongs to us. Now we buy books, pens, bags, etc for our children and support the school. It will be unfair not to monitor what is going on in the school"* (SMC member, Bagire community).
- *"Considering the amount of resources that have gone into the school, it would be unfair not to have teachers in the classroom"* (PTA members, Bagire community).
- *"After spending so much on books, pens, bags and other things, if the children do not stay in school to learn because there is no teacher, that is a waste and it is painful"* (A mother, Tinga, community, TND).

Limits of Ensuring Teacher Accountability

However, there were limits to which the SMC/PTA and community member could hold the teachers accountable particularly in districts which had a weak accountability structure for teachers, poor overall leadership and weak CS performance structure at the DEO level. In some cases the community members/SMC level of education (a lot of them

are illiterates) limits their confidence, willingness and ability to follow through to the highest authorities even though they know their rights. In many cases, there were impediments created to restrict the SMC/PTA and community members from holding teachers accountable. The teachers, Head teachers and interestingly higher authority such as the Circuit Supervisors and officials at the District Education Office are capable of such actions.

The teachers and other authorities employed various tactics including intimidation, threats and verbal abuse against SMC/PTA and community members. They usually threatened to refuse posting to the community or even withdraw teachers from the community if community members complained about the performance and conduct of their teachers. At Anaanore Primary school, when the PTA complained about teacher absenteeism and lateness this was the response from one of the teachers. *"We have heard that Anaanore community force teachers to teach and if you want to force us to teach your children, we will leave the school and you look for your own teachers to teach them. No wonder you don't always have enough teachers in the school"* (SMC Chairman of Anaanore Primary quoting a treat from a teacher). At the same school, a community member recalled a similar encounter with a teacher when he complained about teacher non-performance in the school. *"Look for your own teachers and we will go back to our own communities"* (community member, Anaanore community).

Parents efforts to ensure there is quality education for their children are therefore often limited by teachers and education authorities. The interviews at the community and SMC/PTA revealed that some teachers in the schools particularly in Kassena-Nankana District boldly told illiterate SMC/PTA and community members who visited the school to check on teachers " who are they to monitor without a certificate and authority". The PTA chairman of Ayaga, recounted an instance where he approached a teacher to discuss some issues and the teacher questioned him *"where is your teacher certificate"*. The teachers also verbally abuse the community members and SMC/PTA who try to hold them accountable. One SMC chairman cited an incident where a teacher insulted him as a "useless and foolish old man". The common threat is that if the parents were demanding accountability by asking teachers to come to school regularly and be punctual, they will leave the school. Given the fact that these schools already lacked teachers, this created fear in the parents and SMC/PTA members.

The truncation of the line of accountability and weak leadership which result in inaction by authorities against non-performing teachers reported to education authorities undermined the willingness and ability of communities to continually hold teachers accountable. Many SMC/PTA and community members interviewed are in a quandary and expressed worries as to the next steep to take after reporting non-performing teachers several times to the Circuit Supervisors without seeing any action take against such teachers. It seems the line of accountability at the community level ends at the circuit level. The education authorities have wittingly and some times unwittingly discouraged communities from reporting teachers or problems of the school to authorities above the Circuit Supervisors. In Atoa, the SMC chairman told us that officials from the District Education Office told him that the Circuit Supervisor is the embodiment of the District

Education Director in the circuit, thus all complains must be channelled through him. In other schools in the Kassena–Nankana District, some Circuit Supervisors dared SMC/PTAs to take their complaints to the District Education Office if they think they are not responsive. The SMC chairman said they reported indiscipline teachers five years ago to the District Education Office and their CS told them "be careful with reporting teachers or you will not get any teacher because of the long distance" (SMC chairman, Ayaga Primary, KND).

The lack of action taken against non-performing teachers also stifled accountability at the school level. The SMC/PTA and even the Head teacher and Circuit Supervisors find this frustrating. In three primary schools in Kassena-Nankana District, two of which are LCD schools, parents and SMC/PTAs were frustrated with the lack of action taken against absentee, alcoholic and drug using (marijuana) teachers who have been reported to the Circuit Supervisors several times. According to SMC/PTA members, the Circuit Supervisor told them that he had forwarded their reports to the District Headquarters.   In one instance, two teachers who not attended school for close to nine months had been reported to the Circuit Supervisors several times by the community members. As one frustrated SMC chairman said after numerous attempts to get the District Education Office to act (through the Circuit Supervisor) on non-performing teachers in their school "*You can force a donkey to the river side but you can not force it to drink water*". (SMC chairman, Atoa Primary, KND). The SMC felt they reached the end of the road and do not expect any results, however, they have initiated internal solutions by employing volunteer teachers to fill the gap of these teachers.

5.3   Community Access to Information and Demand for Quality Education

The improved access to information by parents in some districts compared to lack of information in others was a vital aspect of the communities' ability to hold teachers accountable. In districts like KND where terminal reports were not given on a regular basis nor were common terminal examinations being given, the SPAM process was particularly important to the communities as this was the only chance parents had to hear about their child's performance.

Performance of Children

LCD had taken time during its sensitization programmes at the community and Circuit SPAMs to sensitize parents concerning the need to monitor their children's performance. Children at the Bagire school spoke of how their parents checked their note books to see how they were doing and whether the teacher was teaching regularly. Evidence from TND and KND revealed that there was a tremendous difference in the approaches that teachers used to ensure the regular flow of information concerning the child's performance in the school. Head teacher focal group discussions in TND revealed that there was regular reporting of pupils' performance to parents through monthly PTA meetings, posting of marks and terminal reports. This compared favourably to the situation in KND where Head teachers said that they were often unable to send their terminal reports to parents due to the lack of qualified teachers at the school level.

Evidence from community and SMC interviews revealed that parents were very concerned about the performance of their children and told us how they monitor their performance. Some know by observing their children's attitude towards studies. *"--- Also, now they close from school, after eating they (children) take their book to study, that was not happening at first. Don't you think there is improvement in learning in the school?"(*Paulina parent, Tinga Primary School). *"The new Head teacher brought a lot of changes to the school. He is hard working and had improved the school. At first my children in primary 2 and 3 could not count 1,2,3 or read A, B, C, D but now they come home reading books"* (Woman–Parent, Tinga Primary). When you have a child and he/she comes from school and starts writing people's names, objects names---- then you should know that the child is learning in the school (Woman PTA member, Sembu, KND). *"Those even in kindergarten come home signing songs and reciting poems. It is exciting to see these little ones happy to be in school. This is because they are doing well in school"* (PTA treasurer, Sembu, KND).

Some parents check the exercise books and exam papers. Even though they are not literate, they demonstrated how they are able to recognized "correct" from "wrong" marks. Some also said they give the exercise books of their children to older children who can read and write to interpret for them. According to parents the ultimate proof of performance is the children's ability to transition from primary to Junior Secondary School (JSS) and passed the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). The district's approach is similar to the parents and they collate and analyse BECE results every year to monitor the performance of pupils in the district.

Evidence from the community interviews revealed that the district education offices were organising Performance Monitoring Tests (PMTs) and School Performance Appraisal Meetings (SPAMs). The SPAMs organised include circuit and community/school SPAMs. SMC and community members recounted how they were told in some meetings they attended about the position of their school in the circuit and the performance of the pupils in their school. At Sembu and Tarebora for instance, parents recounted with excitement and pride how happy they were when the SMC chairmen returned from a circuit SPAM to inform them that their school was second and first in the district. At Ayaga, the SMC recalled that they had two SPAMs: in the first SPAM their school did well and they were happy and congratulated the teacher for their hard work: but in the second SPAM, their school took 48th position out of 52 schools in the district ranking. As an aftermath the parents blamed the teachers and the teachers blamed the parents for the poor performance of the children.

Changes in Cultural Practices to Ensure Children Go to School

One of the most impressive impacts of LCD's work found across the two evaluative districts was that the variety of interventions by LCD and other NGO's were making had a combined impact on changing traditional behaviours particularly in relation to the girl child. Where parents believed quality education was being delivered they made efforts to ensure that their girl child had the time it took to do their home work and attend school

(Interviews with parents in Bagire community, TND). Two factors may provide a unique picture for children in the Upper East Region. The first is that their parents are realising that schooling may be the only route out of poverty and a better life; and the second is that the communities involved in this evaluation knew that quality education should be provided to their children.

Apart from the physical investment made by families, parents talked about other costs associated with sending their children (especially girls) to school. Many women said they exempt schooling girls from doing household chores such as sweeping, cooking, fetching water, etc so that they could concentrate on their studies. They also reduced their dependence on schooling children for farm labour and marrying school girls for bribe prize. They emphasised that these was great sacrifices. From all the SMC/PTA and Parents interviews, parents see education as a route out of poverty for their children. *"I tell the children the way we are suffering; we don't want you to suffer like us."* (Woman: PTA member, Sembu, KND).

The motivation to send children to school and to ensure that they received quality education permeated both Link and non-Link schools across the two districts. In Sembu and Tinga which are both non-Link schools, parents told us what motivates them to make sure the children get quality education. "*We do not want our children to suffer the way we are suffering, that is why we want to make sure our children are in school learning*" (Atampore, Tinga primary, TND). "*As a mother my duty is to wake up the children early in the morning and give them food and let them go to school. We want them to be able to read and write; even if they do not go far, that alone can help them a lot*" (PTA member, Sembu). "*My son is very stubborn, so I always take him to the school myself and hand him over to the teacher. I also go back to check on him*" (Azure Ama, Tinga primary, TND).

5.4   Community School Ownership

One of the key outcomes of the LCD programme was the improved local ownership of the schools. This was found to be facilitated by several factors including the fundraising efforts, increased awareness of child performance and the need for parents to get involved in bringing about quality improvements in the schools. The level of sensitization within the communities was very high due to the efforts of Link and several other NGO's working in the district including: CRS, WFP, Censudi and Action Aid. These sensitization efforts improved the performance of schools in terms of their fundraising efforts and the increased in SMC and PTA involvement in the schools.

Since the LCD programme entered Nyobare in 1999 the community has been able to construct a bore hole with a special grant and it has contributed regularly when "conditional grants are made available." From the beginning of the SPAM process the community members (particularly the SMC and PTA) visit the school on a regular basis and hold at least two PTA meetings with the teachers in a term to review the progress of their wards. The SPR process in the community had made them aware of the performance of their children and since the last SPAM was undertaken in 2007/08 (Oct. 2008) they have been very keen on seeing the regular attendance of teachers. The Head teachers and teachers explained that they are being closely monitored by the parents and SMC/PTA members. Sometimes the SMC members check their performance by observing classroom instruction and listen in on the classes. The SMC and parents also explained that despite the fact they can not read or write they are able to see the Xs and ticks on their children's exercise books and can see if the teachers are regularly marking their children's work.

Bagire is an example of how a combination of LSP and SPR and capacity building programmes can make a difference to school quality. There was evidence in Bagire and other Link schools in TND that showed that the LCD schools were functioning at a slightly higher level than the non-LCD schools in TND. This was due to the added value of the Link conditional grants helping communities, strong supervision of the CSs and strengthened community school relationship brought about by regular meetings between the HT and SMC members. The Head teacher explained that the LCD conditional and special grants assisted the school community find immediate solutions to their problems at the school. The Head teacher explained that the LCD grant enabled him to purchase cupboards and plastic containers for water in the classrooms which had increased the contact hours of teachers and ensured better instruction by allowing teachers to stay in the classroom instead of coming to the HT each time they need books. The location of the well close to the school has also facilitated increased contact hours particularly for girls since they do not have to fetch water any more for the school.

Almost all the schools visited were started by the communities; the community members have been involved in one way or the other in the building of the most of the infrastructures in the school. In some cases, the community members built classroom blocks, kitchens, teacher quarters etc. They also provided labour in classroom blocks provided by donors such as DFID, EU, World Vision, amongst others. Members of many of the communities visited see the schools as an integral part of the community. In the brief histories given of the schools, member proudly explained the contribution of their schools towards making their villages popular. They also see the maintenance of schools as not only the responsibly of parents but of the whole community. Communities have made several initiatives aimed at expanding the schools and enhancing teaching and learning. At Anaanore for instance, the community are putting up a three classroom unit block so that their school could have a JSS. In Atoa, the community is paying four volunteers to teach in the school because there are not enough teachers; in Ayaga the community are feeding the school pupils; in Saazo the PTA/SMC were renovating the KG; and in Tinga, the community was putting up a KG block.

There is evidence of strong community ownership of the school. The huge investment that community members are making in the schools reinforces ownership. "We want to state categorically that we suffered to build this school; the NGOs (EU and DFID) helped us, the government did not help much but the District Assembly supported us to roof the old mad block"(Chief/SMC chairman, Sembu Primary school, KND). Some communities were quick to state that they will sustain some of these initiatives such as fund raising after Link pulls out.. "Because we have built the school ourselves, we have the school at heart --- we will continue with funding raising at harvest and continue with what the whites had helped us to do" (SMC chairman, Tarebora Primary School, TND). Training of SMC executives by GES/ Link and SPAMs also imbue community ownership and leadership in the school. In two of the schools visited, chiefs of the communities were keenly involved in mobilising community members to provide support to the schools. At Tinga, the chief mobilised community members and also got money from eco-tourism (community operated tourism) to support the building of KG for the school. At Sembu, the chief was the SMC chairman.

Breaking the Chain of Accountability: Kassena-Nankana Area

The differences between Link and non-Link schools in relation to community ownership and community participation in school improvement were much more difficult to see in KND. The overarching problems of teacher absenteeism and indiscipline within the teaching force had literally forced communities to sit up and start helping themselves. There was a severe problem in the KND with teacher indiscipline and four of the five communities visited in KND were supporting their own community volunteer teachers to work at the schools (LCD and non LCD).

Communities and the SMC's across the district reported that they had been told by senior District Education Staff who visited their schools not to come to the office to report but to go directly to the CSs responsible for their schools. One community facing a severe problem of teacher attendance for over five years was unable to report to the DEO as during the last visit they were told to go through their CSs (Atoa). When they went through the CS the Head teacher and the SMC members interviewed said there was no action taken. SMC's also reported the following comments made by their own teachers:

- We know you people at Anaanore and if you don't stop complaining you will not get any more trained teachers…
- Other teachers told the PTA chair in Ayaga directly that: "where is your certificate… who are you to be asking about our whereabouts?"
- The same communities had been warned by the CSs in some cases that if they were not careful they would not get trained teachers again.
- District officers also spoke of how "when you let communities get too strong they start complaining all the time."

Kassena-Nankana's case demonstrated that SPR alone was not adequate to break the "culture of silence" when a chain of accountability was not set up by the District Education Managers Offices. The experience of Kassena-Nankana suggests that when

SMC's and PTA's become aware of the problems of their school – particularly the irregularity of teachers and the poor performance of their children (through PMT, etc) they need an objective and efficient channel to voice their concerns. The KND district education office systematically found ways through the CSs to dampen the voice of the SMCs who were calling for action against absent, non-performing and recalcitrant teachers. The worst case found in KND demonstrates how inaction was taken at the Head, CS and even the district education office level.

In-depth interviews with pupils, SMC and Head teacher at Atoa school revealed that two of the three trained teachers posted to the school had been absent for the last seven months. The HT explained that the two teachers were not attending school at all and one of them would show up simply to sign the teacher attendance book. The CS was aware of the problem as the SMC and the Head teacher had made several efforts to report the cases however no action had been taken at the District Education Office level. The problem of teacher absenteeism had been going on for a long time in this community and the SMC and PTA voiced their desire for new teachers since they no longer trusted the teachers who had been posted to their schools. The experience of Atoa and two other schools in the same circuit demonstrated that teachers were often late or did not show up on a regular basis. Interviews with the children suggested that it was only the communities own volunteer teachers who attended the school regularly. Most of the trained and pupil teachers posted lived over 5 km away from the school and those interviewed including the Head teacher complained of having to fuel their motorbikes on a daily basis. Children explained that when the teachers do come to the school they would sit in the Head teachers' office and chat or sometimes be so tired that they could not teach.

Visits to three other schools in the Nankana area of the district confirmed that the manner in which the trained and pupil teachers who lived outside the community were dampening the spirit of the community since they did not believe they were receiving fair and equitable treatment. The officers at the DEO including CSs had also managed to intimidate the communities to a degree that they no longer knew where to go with their complaints.   Several SMC members complained to the evaluation team that they want their own teachers from the Nankana area to teach them. When asked if they wanted trained or untrained teachers they said it no longer mattered they just wanted "their own people to teach their children." That was exactly what was happening in these schools… the communities had started to support their own volunteers who were either newly SSS graduates or women who had been in the community and completed JSS to take the KG classes (Ayaga).

Conclusion

At the community level, there was a high sense of ownership which was evident in the attitude of communities and parents towards school development issues. Parents and communities embarked on various investment drives in the school which ranged from improvement in infrastructure to quality teaching and learning in the classroom. Pivotal to community ownership was their increasing involvement in school management. This

was enhanced by the Links' fund raising and grants efforts which made SMC/PTAs co-signatories to the Link account. There was not much variance between Link and Non-link schools in relation to the level of community involvement and ownership. What was emerging from the evidence suggested that the higher the level of investment by communities in the school particularly where district education offices were not functioning made communities even more aware of to their rights.

Communities were well sensitised by a range of NGOs and were increasingly challenging the authorities to ensure quality education and discipline in the teaching force. The PMT, and SPAM processes were particularly effective in "waking up communities to their right to quality education." LCD ensured that during the SPAM meetings SMC's were made aware of their rights to monitor the schools and teacher attendance. In a situation where education authorities were not supportive, community members were starting to find their own solutions. Thus the training of SMC/PTA executives by Link on their role and responsibilities was helping to sensitise the communities. The challenge was for the DEO to act on these demands and improve teacher conduct and performance in the schools.

Chapter 6:   School Level Outcomes and Impact

The overall goal of the LCD programme interventions was to "improve quality of teaching and learning in underprivileged Ghanaian schools…" and improve learning outcomes for children at the school level. This chapter reviews the evaluation results at school level by assessing four main areas of LCD intervention which include improving quality education delivery, school management, teacher performance, and pupil performance. The LCDs approach also supported direct interventions to improve teaching learning outcomes through several approaches to support head teachers and teacher's instructional practice, in-service training through regular circuit supervisor workshops and direct inputs such as TLMs to schools in order to improve quality.

The Link School Programme also contributed directly to improving school effectiveness through the various aspects of its programme including;
- Increasing school management capabilities in areas of financial and project management and involvement of the community;
- quality improvement through: improving access to TLMs and text books; improved pedagogical methods; infrastructure; planning and preparation of lesson notes and delivery; time on task; and teacher motivation through cross cultural exchange programmes; and
- improved performance of children in the schools.

The following section outlines the key findings related to the school level outcomes observed across the two evaluative districts. Focal group discussions were conducted with over 35 head teachers and teachers across TND and KND. The evaluation team also conducted school visits to assess school management and interviewed key education stakeholders across the nine communities. In KND most of the head teachers of both Link and non-Link school were new.   The following table outlines the schools, time span of head teachers and the level of training received from LCD.

District and Schools	Link /Non Link	Head teacher Years at post	Training by LCD	Visits to the UK
Talensi				
Bagire	Link	Over 5 years	Several times attended LCD training	---
Tarebora	Link	Over 5 years	Several times attended training	Visit to the UK
Tinga	Non Link	Less than 2 years		---
Saazo	Non Link	Over 5 years		---
Kassena-Nankana				
Alagba	Link	New HT (less than one year)	Attended Training once	
Atoa	Link	New HT	Attended training once	
Ayaga	Link	New heads	Attended training once	
Sembu	Non Link	New heads		
Anaanore	Non Link	New heads		

Evidence from interviews conducted with circuit supervisors, head teachers, teachers, pupils and community members confirmed that LCD programmes have contributed to improving quality education across schools in the district. Programmes including the PMT/SPAM process, provision of TLMs, improvement of school infrastructure, in-service training for teachers (phonic approach, lesson preparation, etc) and exchange activities with Link Partner schools (e.g. exchange of letters and drawing, teacher exchange visits, etc) were cited as enhancing teacher performance and improving learning outcomes at the school level. The LCD programme also enhanced school management through training workshops on financial, data and school management organised for head teachers and SMC chairpersons. In the area of teacher performance, the evidence revealed a mixed picture but it was clear that teacher performance is significantly and directly dependent on the strengthening of leadership. Where there is strong and good leadership, teacher performance was good and the reverse was true. There were also differences in the means adopted to assess pupils' performance and to communicate these learning outcomes to pupils and their parents. Above all, a lot of the outcomes translated into better performance by pupils. Many people interviewed at TND, revealed the Links schools were outperforming their non-Link counterparts.

Tarebora Example of LCD Impact

Tarebora is an excellent example of LCD's impact in a school which benefited from both the LSP and the SPR programme and where Head teacher capacity had been built. Tarebora is a school which systematically improved its performance and attendance over the last five years. There was a direct increase in enrolment; when asked the reasons for the increased attendance rates the SMC said they were not near a market centre. It was also a feeder school to Presentation JSS a well known JSS in KND with ICT facilities in the school.

LCD was training its teachers providing grants to the school and trained the SMC chairman and it was here that " Since they knew their wards performance this was helping them to want to provide for the children's basic needs " The community SMC's were able to make their teachers accountable –children's even reported the case to the parents and head so that the parents intervened and the teacher was reported to the CS and he was transferred to another school and finally taken off the payroll by the GES.

6.1 School Management

Evidence from the interviews conducted across the nine evaluative schools suggested that school management including project data and financial management, school-community relations and staff management was stronger in TND than KND. This was partly a result of Head teachers having been at the post for a longer period and the fact that very few new Head teachers demonstrated an ability to sustain the good management and filing practices set in motion by their previous heads. Another factor was that the discipline instilled at the district offices including processes of rewarding ……….. and punishing recalcitrant teachers had ensured that the entire TND was responsive to the new "culture of teaching and discipline." Far fewer reports of teacher absenteeism and a change in the culture of teaching were apparent in the TND brought about by a new approach to head

teacher leadership (e.g. demotion for non-performing Head teachers and removal from the school sometimes on the advice of the community).

While school-community relations in TND were very cordial and progressive, at KND school-community relation was characterized by hostility between the teachers and the communities. The PMT and SPAM were greatly facilitating improvement in quality delivery of education at the circuit and school levels. These processes also gave voice to stakeholders who by convention had no say in school management. The increased resource flows through the conditional and special grants provided Link schools with an added advantage over non-Link schools. These resources often allowed schools to solve immediate problems facing them which resulted in better financial management in the Link schools. The increased support to teaching and learning processes was also enhanced by the support that LCD was providing in terms of responsive support to the district education directorate for in-service training, onsite supervision and training in areas of literacy and lesson note preparation

Financial Planning and Data Management

Link as part of its programme gives training to head teachers in Link schools on data and financial management. These came out in the Head teachers interviews in both TND and KND. Auditing of the school based information data availability and organisation in the school revealed that the Link schools were better in terms of availability of data and degree of organisation than the non-Link schools. In all the Link schools visited where the head teacher had been in post for more than a year, the data were well organised and it was not difficult to locate documents. Records of financial management such as petty cash and cash books were up to date in the TND. However at KND, most of the Head teachers were new to the schools however but in most cases their predecessors had arranged the documentation well. In Alagba for instance, the previous Head teacher had a list of files in the office and instructions as to where they were located posted on the wall. However, the new head, after resuming office for over five months, could not locate the files because he did not keep the filing up to date. The full assessment by the team suggests the following in terms of data available across the 9 LCD schools

Table 11: Existence and Organisation of Financial Documentation in the Schools[8]

Items	Link		Non-link	
	Exist	Up to date /Organisation	**Exist**	Up to date/ Organisation
Capitation SPIPS	√	Good	√	Good
SPIPS	√	Good	×	
Petty cash books	√	Good	×	
Cash analysis book	√	Good	√	Good
Financial record – bank statement , audit reports,	√	Good	√	Poor

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[8] See Annex   for a more detailed account of the

From table 11, it can be concluded that Link schools have maintained better financial records, plans and management tools which the Head teachers were using. The introduction of petty cash books among others into the Link schools helped track expenses. These were non-existent in the non-Link schools. Thus the Link school Head teachers are better financial managers given that they have had training on financial management and have been given tools to operate effectively. The LCD offices also ensured yearly random audits were conducted in LCD schools; this helped to improve and hold the HTs accountable. Data management was also an issue. Link Head teachers who have been in post for more than a year (i.e. TND) had bank statements, audit reports, receipts, etc of both the capitation grant and the Link grant.

Interviews with DDE and the CS of both districts suggested that Link schools were also in a better position to provide financial data and management. Interviews with the front line ADs and DDE across the two evaluative districts suggest that they did see differences between the LCD schools who developed their GES/MOE SPIPs and the non LCD schools who had recently developed their SPIPs. They believed that the LCD schools were much better prepared to develop and manage the capitation grants due to their experience in managing the LCD SPIP. This was confirmed by Head teachers in interviews at the school and small group meetings between LCD and non LCD school Heads in KN and Talensi-Nabdam.

Three out of the five LCD schools visited had a copy of their SPR reports but they were not being used after the SPAM process for any other purposes. The Link Head teachers visited at TND had their SPR but one of the three Link schools in the KND was able to retrieve its SPR. This was because as stated earlier, all the Link schools Head teachers in KND were new. This was the same with SIPs and the Link SPIPs. In general the LCD and the non-LCD schools had developed their SIPs through the support of the CS immediately following a SPAM meeting and based on the outcomes of the SPAM, the School Improvement Plans were developed.

In non-LCD schools that had only the SPAM processes, a SIP was developed and used as the basis of other planning processes such as the Capitation grant SPIP. This meant that the SPAM depending on the timing could lead to greater insights into the problems confronting the school. The findings from the evaluation suggest that head teachers, teacher and community members could remember what had transpired at their SPAM meetings even if it had been some time ago. According to them this is because the meetings are always "fired up with tension and defence."   Teachers in one of the LCD communities described the meeting as "paralyzing" since some of the teachers who were absent from the school on a regular basis were publicly reprimanded by the community. These teachers also explained that pupils and parents pointed fingers at non-performing teachers at the meeting and concluded that it was not a nice experience (Teacher, Bagire Primary).

Table12: Data Availability at School Level

	Minutes of PTA /SMC	Availability of the SPR Particularly PMT Results	Presence of SIP or Notes from the SPAM Meeting	Availability of the SPIP (Link)	GES SPIP	Teacher Attendance Book	General Level of Filing and Order of School Records.
Bagire (Link)	√	√	√	√	√	√	Very good
Tarebora (Link)	√	√	√	√	√	√	Very good
Ayaga (Link)	√	√	×	×	√	√	Poor
Alagba (Link)	√	×	×	×	√	√	Fair
Atoa (Link)	√	×	×	√	√	√	good
Tinga (non Link)	√	×	×	×	√	√	Very good
Saazo* non Link	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Anaanore # non Link	√	√		×		√	Fair
Sembu Non link	×	×	×	×	√	√	Poor

* The team did not meet the Head teacher so there was no audit at the school

\# There was no access to financial data because the Head teacher who had the keys to the office was not available.

6.2   Quality improvement

Performance Monitoring Tests and School Performance Appraisal Meetings

From all the interviews, it is undoubtedly clear that PMT and SPAMs were crucial in improving school management and education quality in the schools. The PMT and SPAM process engendered democratic principles in school management. It gave voice to the various key stakeholders in community schools including community members, SMC/PTA executives and pupils who conventionally would have been easily ignored. The process enhances the chain of accountability and reminds stakeholders of their responsibilities towards the school. For the community including chiefs, parents, SMC/PTA executives and pupils, it brings renewed confidence to actively involve themselves and take ownership of schools in the community. It also diminished the gap between school authorities (teacher, head teachers, CS) and the community as they discuss issues that pertain to improving the school using an independent means of assessment instead of the usual PTA meetings where either the PTA or the Head teacher draws the agenda for the meeting.

Interviewees across the nine evaluative school/communities revealed the benefits of PMT and SPAM to their schools. Teachers, community members and pupils catalogued actions to be taken to improve the quality of education in the school emanating from the SPAM process (see Table13 below). The table below shows three schools in each district who have translated issues raised in their SPAMs into actions over the last two years in Link and non-Link schools.

Table 13: Actions Resulting from School/Community SPAMs

School	Link/non-Link	Problems/Issues	Actions after SPAM
Kassena-Nankana District			
Atoa	Link	• Shortage of teachers and teacher absenteeism, drunkenness and drug abuse (marijuana)	• Engage and pay three volunteer teachers from the community; • Report two absenteeism teachers to Head teacher and then to Circuit Supervisor • Increase monitoring and visits of school by SMC chairman and other PTA members
Ayaga	Link	• Teacher shortage • Low attendance as a result of roll out of CRS feed programme • Low performance of teachers as a result of absenteeism and lateness which teachers blame on the distance they have to travel to school • Pupils not comfortable with typed questions during the PMT exams	• Engage one volunteer teacher from the community • Community contribute food to continue providing food for pupils • Commitment by SMC to award teachers if the school gets a high ranking in the next PMT • Provision of teachers' quarters to accommodated teachers in the community • Introduced typed exam for Primary 1 to P6.
Anaanore	Non-Link	• Shortage of teachers and teacher lateness, absenteeism and drunkenness • Lack of classroom space for JSS pupil	• Engage one community volunteer teacher • Frequent visit to school by SMC chair and other • Report non-performing teachers to CS • Building of a three classroom unit block (with cement blocks)
Tanlesi-Nabdam District			
Bagire	Link	• Distance pupil move to access to drinking water during class hours. • Stoppage of CRS feed programme	• Containers to store water in classroom to limit pupil movement from class • Borehole drilled in the school compound to provide water for pupil • School farm which feed pupil in school
Tarebora	Link	• Access to drinking water by Pupils;	• Containers to store water in classroom to limit pupils

School	Link/non-Link	Problems/Issues	Actions after SPAM
		• Poor pupils not able to buy books and uniforms;	movement from class
Tinga	Nom-Link	• Irregular attendance of pupils to school; • Lack of class for KG • Shortage of teachers	• Engage one community volunteer teacher • Parents now able to monitor children and make sure they are in school • Community building two classroom unit block (cement) for KG

Head teachers, teacher and education officials at district level were quick to recommend the PMT and SPAM in improving education delivery at the school level. As one head teacher said "it puts us on our toes". According to another Head teacher, "SPAM is good for the school because it helps you to know your weakness. ---it serves as a check. After the SPAM, some of the parents became more responsible" (Head teacher, KND). Many Head teachers said that after the SPAM there were changes in the schools; Circuit Supervisors visited more frequently, parents began to live up to expectations and teachers also tried to improve their performance. According to the interview with the Deputy Director of Education in KND, "SPAMs are organised in an open manner; pupils openly talked about the behaviour of teachers, teachers talked about the behaviour of parents. It results in improvement in school management,--- "the various stakeholder resolved to change afterwards". He added that they adopted what they termed "aggressive monitoring" where almost all officers at the district office visited schools to monitor them because of very poor performance by certain schools.

The SPAM Experience at Ayaga, KND

Head Teacher: When the PMT report was announced at the SPAM, the school performed badly and the parents were not happy. The parents blamed teachers for not teaching well and the teachers blamed the parents for not providing the basic needs of their children such as books, pens, etc and not feeding the children before they come to school. The pupils blamed teachers for not teaching well and teaching topic for their exams only. The children were also admonished for not attending school regularly and engaging in selling. At the end "everybody had its own share". "The way the exam was taken was not fair. The examiners were drunk and children were not also prepared. The exam was conducted in rush and that also accounted for the poor performance" (Head teacher, Ayaga Primary School).

SMC Chairman: There are two SPAMs conducted in the school. The school was ranked fourth in the district in the first PMT. The parents gave credit to the teachers. However, the teachers were transferred afterwards. In the second one, the school ranked 48th out 52 schools in the district. There was a lot of blame directed at the SPAM. The parents said it was the teacher's fault. The teacher blamed the parents for pupil attendance but the parents said there is no problem with pupil attendance because of the feed programme in the school. Furthermore the teachers who conducted the exams were drunk and they started late.

[The team asked the SMC: How do you resolve the disagreement between teacher and parents?] "Animals always advise each other before they go to drink from the river. If not they will fight. This means they discuss the problem and try to find solutions. The SMC made a commitment to award the teachers if they the school ranks high in the next SPAM.

Evidence from Ayaga indicates that the analysis of the SPRs was helping Head teachers to identify problems and plan particularly in relation to the capitation grant process. District Education officials and Head teachers interviewed from LCD and non LCD schools confirmed that the SPAM process had assisted both LCD and non LCD better plan their School Performance Improvement Plans for the Government. LCD schools were in a slightly better position in terms of being able to plan and budget since they had had experience in planning out their SIPS and SPIPs for receiving LCD project grant funds. Head teachers also explained that they were better able to manage their finances due to the training provided by LCD.

The evaluation revealed that in highly sensitive districts in the Upper East Region more training would be needed by LCD staff and volunteers to manage and prevent conflict. Given the highly sensitized issues of education and resources more work would be needed to help communities and their teachers with consensus building techniques and to ensure that SPAMs were a starting point for more dialogue.

School Classroom Resources and other Incentives (including TLMs)

There are remarkable differences in term of resource inflow and privileges enjoyed by Link and Non-link schools which enhanced the quality of teaching and learning in the school. Many non-LCD Head teachers and teachers asserted that Link schools "were far better off than non-Link schools even though there are other resources that non-Link school also benefit from. They stated the Link schools had more resources like TLMs, sports equipment, grants, etc as listed in the table below that facilitate teaching and learning in Link school which is absent in non-Link schools.

Specific programmes like partner schools (exchange of letters and teacher visits), school grants and fund raising, TLMs and "Let's Read" programme were particularly appealing for the non-Link schools. A number of Link schools were improving the school infrastructure and facilities from their school grants and special grants. At the Ayaga, the community were building teacher's quarters from these grants; at Tarebora the school built two urinals from these grants and were given drums and sports equipment by their partners; and at Bagire the school had a borehole drug from these grants. Other evidence of support found included furniture, water containers, and drums on the walls. They concluded that the resource inflow boosted quality teaching and learning in Link schools.

	Link Schools	Non-Link Schools
School incentive grants/fund raising	√	×
Special grants (for projects)	√	×
Letter writing and school partnership (including exchange visit)	√	×
In-services training for Head teachers	√	×
"Let's Read" programme (in selected schools)	√	√
In-services training for teachers	√	√
PMT and SPAM	√	√
District support grants (Fuelling of CSs motors, etc.)	√	√

Teaching Learning Materials (TLMs) were available in most of the Link schools particularly those who were part of the Link "Let's Read" programme from the UK. The "Let's Read" programme also included non-Link schools; there were five schools each in KND and TND which were non-LCD schools. The UK partners and the LCD staff produced and delivered TLM kits to schools as part of the programme. The kits are based on the phonic method produced for each class level. Some schools also had TLMs presented at in their classrooms such as the human organs, plants, etc which pupils said were very helpful. Other schools were privileged to have their partners schools in the UK send TLMs to them and teach partners teachers how to prepare TLMs.

Apart from that, the Link grant enabled Link schools to purchase books for pupils (in some schools for needy pupils) and other materials needed for the preparation of TLMs. This has been acclaimed by teachers and pupils as contributing remarkably to enhancing teaching learning in the classroom and improving pupils' performance. However, interviews with the teachers in some of these schools particularly in the rural areas of both districts indicated that more training was needed to use these materials (Bagire, Tarebora). Teachers in these schools said they were not given proper instructions how to use TLMs since some were not involved in the training.

Schools	TLM	Remark
Bagire (Link)	√	Well organised
Tarebora (Link)	√	Well organised
Ayaga** (Link)	×	
Alagba** (Link)	×	
Atoa** (Link)	√	Excellently organised
Tinga (non Link)	√	Fairly well organised
Saazo* (non Link)	-	-
Anaanore # (non Link)	×	
Sembu** (Non link)	×	

* Head teacher not available at the time of visit
** Head teachers are new

In-service training

The quality of education delivery in terms of teaching and learning processes was also enhanced by the support that LCD was providing in the arena of in-service training, onsite supervision and training in areas of literacy and lesson note preparation. Many head teachers and teachers interviewed particularly at KND confirmed that they had been given in-service training in different areas including phonics methodology at the lower primary level classes, TLMs preparation, lesson note preparation, and teaching certain subject by the district supported by LCD or by the CS.

The Circuit Supervisors acknowledged that training was done on a regular basis to refresh them on their roles and responsibilities in relation to supervision of teachers.

Interviews with district and LCD staff suggest that two types of training had been carried out on a yearly basis to build the capacities of the CSs and head teachers of LCD schools. There are several other training programmes which are less regular but carried out with the specific goals of improving teaching and learning in the classroom such as the "Let's Read Training" for a smaller group of schools.

Teacher Performance

Teacher performance was one of the major issues of concern to pupils, community members and some Head teachers. At both districts, there was no difference between Link and non-Link schools in teacher performance in term of attendance, punctually and discipline. In both Link and non-Link schools there were reported cases of teacher non-performance such as absenteeism, lateness, drunkenness, drug abuse and abuse of pupils by teachers (beating pupils, taking pupils to farms during instructional hours, verbal abuse, etc). However, there are marked variation in the incidence of teacher non-performance between KND and TND. Also the success of such measures taken to solve these problems also differed greatly between the two districts.

At KND, it was clear that teacher non-performance manifested in teacher absenteeism, lateness, drunkenness and even drug abuse was a major challenge to the delivery of quality education in the district. Out of the five schools visited, four schools had serious problems with non-performing teachers. This came out in all the interviews with SMC executives, parents, head teachers and Circuit Supervisors. Pupils narrated how drunken teachers sleep in class instead of teaching and beat and insulted pupils at will. At one school in KND, pupils recounted how a drug abused teacher would sleep in class and often beat pupils.

Teacher Attendance and Contact Time

The evaluation team found that the main differences in the teacher contact hours and quality of teaching and learning was based on the teachers being held accountable by district offices and circuit supervisors for their work. A complex supervisory system which was based on performance; reward and punishment for underperformance respectively was set up in TND and other districts in the region including Bongo and Bawku West districts. These were based on the District Directors levels of management and leadership capabilities and were enhanced by the LCD programme.

Contact hours and high levels of absenteeism were apparent in the KND district where interviews with head teachers and teachers themselves presented a severe problem of teacher deployment to rural areas with teachers wanting to remain at the district capital and were not monitored. The children and parents were learning to cope by hiring volunteer teachers from the communities to fill the teacher gaps. They were also experiencing a better performance from "their own teachers who were willing to serve in the school." Responses of children in TND relating to commitment of teachers and contact hours demonstrated the main differences across the two districts

Table 14: Responses of Children across Kassena-Nankana

	Anaanore P6 boys interviewed at Anaanore (non Link)	(Alagba-- Link) P6 girls interviewed
About teachers' attendance	" some of the teachers wait in the Head teacher's office until closing time and they then give us homework" "Some come early and some come late due to the distance of their homes to the school."	" Mr Raymond (pupil teacher-P6) is the only teacher out of the (4) teachers who is regular… the other teachers come twice a week and very late… closing early from school" "The other teacher comes to the school around 10am and leaves at about 12 noon but teacher Raymond comes about 7:30 and closes at 1:30 PM." "The Head teacher is not regular in school but when ever he is in school he teaches us and closes at 1: 30 PM with Raymond."
How teachers teach	"Teachers get angry when we try to find out what we do not understand…" "Teachers beat children since they claim the school compound is not well kept and students come late…meanwhile the teacher's come late…'	"Yes they teach us any time they are in school but leave early…"
Text books	"Textbooks are not enough and kept in the Head teacher's office and when we need to use them… they give six of us to one book."	"We have few textbooks on Maths, English and Science… so when teachers are not in school we read them by ourselves."
How is your performance in school	"We know our performance through our exam papers and class tests…if we can read well we compare our exam papers when the teachers give us but we don't know our position…"	"Out of ten people taking the terminal exam only three pass and seven fail."
How our parents know our performance Feeling of parents when they perform badly	"Parents look at our exercise books and exam papers given to us."	Parents are always sad when we perform badly… they say: "we are wasting our money on you for nothing…" and others sad that their parents also beat them.
Children's attendance at school	"Some children stay away to do dry season gardening… also because the feeding programme stopped some children are reluctant to come to school…"	
What makes them drop out from school	"If a boy should impregnate a girl then he stays home to take care of the pregnant girl…" "We can also drop out from school if our printing of exam fees are not paid…	"If we do not have uniforms then our friends make a mockery of us and this can make us leave school…" Death can also make us drop out since there is no one to take care of us… " If our performance is very poor then we also drop out of school…" "Some go with relatives to Kumasi and then they end their schooling there." " when a boy says he loves you and you refuse him… any time you are going or coming home from school he will beat you…that makes us drop out"

Head teacher Motivation

Some of the Link schools had Head teachers who where highly motivated because they had benefited from the Link partnership exchange programme which afforded them the opportunity to travel to the UK. They were very excited and thought they learned a lot from the trip. They recounted the training and some of the lessons they learnt about the UK schools and how they had infused them into their schools. At focal group meetings with Head teachers in both districts, non-Link school Head Teachers pointed to the UK visits and exchanges of letters as one of the major benefits of Link schools which non-Link schools were not privileged to.

Managing the Community School Relationship

Another critical area of Head teacher performance was in relation to the importance of managing their relationships with the community. It was evident from the study that in some schools a strong relationship was forged between schools (teachers and Head teacher) and communities. The LCD grant and training of Head teachers was paramount in the ability of head teachers to build a trusting and conducive relationship with communities to the mutual benefit of the school. In contrast, some school Head teachers and teachers probably with less training by LCD could not benefit from cordial school-community relation and its attendant dividends. Their relationship with community members was very fragile and often marred with mistrust, intimidation and threats.

There was staggering difference in community school relations between TND and KND. TND district is cordial and progressively accommodating. The teachers and community member including the PTA/SMC work in harmony. There was not much difference between Link and non-Link schools. Also at TND, due to good leadership and improvement in quality of education, parents and teacher did not have many disagreements when it came to accountability issues.

On the contrary, evidence from the interviews indicated that community-school relations in KND is characterised by hostility and threats. Even though communities were doing so much in terms; of providing infrastructure in schools; providing teacher volunteers to supplement teachers efforts; providing food for pupils to stay in school; and engaging in fund raising to augment the resource inflow to schools, teachers and community members still have issues when it came to accountability. Much of the acrimony between teachers and communities was a direct result of the community trying to hold teachers accountable. In most of these schools, Head teachers, community members (including SMC/PTA) and pupils complained about grossly indiscipline behaviour by teachers. This included absenteeism, lateness, drunkenness, drug abuse, pupil abuse and abandonment of school by some teachers.

6.4   Pupil Assessment and Performance Monitoring

Pupil Assessment and Performance Reporting

According to the pupils, they measure their own performance through the class exercises and tests. At some schools in the TND, the pupils were given class tests every week and they used the test results to rank each other. This was only observed in two Links schools in TND. Another means of determining performance is through the terminal examinations. At TND, pupils write a common exam which is set by the district for all the schools in the district. The results of the exam are used to rank pupils at the school, circuit and district level. The common exam replaced the PMT formally conducted by Link in TND.

It was observed that the ranking of schools at circuit and district level stimulated competition among circuits, schools and pupils. At Tarebora and Bagire primary schools for instance, pupils knew the position of their schools and themselves in the last term common exams. The results of the common exams were also communicated to their parents through terminal report cards and at PTA meetings. Almost all the schools interviewed revealed that they convened PTA meeting at the end of each term and the beginning of the new term to tell parents about the performance of their wards.

In KND, the schools conduct terminal exams but they did not give terminal report cards to pupils. This was corroborated by Head teachers of all the five schools visited. The Head teachers explained that due to the shortage of teachers in the schools, they have many volunteer teachers who are not willing to do the cumbersome work of recording and preparing terminal report for pupils given that they not paid to do the task.

The Link schools interviewed also said the schools present prizes to the first three pupils in each class in a grand occasion where sub-chiefs and elders of the communities present the prizes to winners. This practice was observed in two out of the four schools in TND and one of five schools at KND.

Another way of assessment performance was through Performance Monitoring Test (PMT). In KND, the last PMT was conducted about two years ago and the district has instituted district common exams as a substitute for the last two years. In KND, they had had two rounds of PMTs, the first one in 2006/07 and the last one in 2008/09. The results of the PMTs were used to conduct SPAMS at the community/school, circuit and district levels. However at KND, Link conducts PMTs in selected link and non link schools in the districts. The PMTs are followed with SPAMs at the circuit and community/school levels. At the SPAMS, the pupils, parents, teachers, Head teachers and Circuit Supervisors are brought together to discuss the issues affecting the performance of children in the schools and draw plans to solves them. Interviews with community member, teachers, head teacher, circuit supervisors asserted that the SPAMs were an effective approach to bringing various stakeholders together including parents, pupil, teachers, head, teachers, circuit supervisors to assess their roles in relation to the school performance.

According to interviews with head teachers, teachers and pupils, teachers who are not performing well are admonished at the school SPAMs. Parents and pupils talk about teachers who are absent from school or who are drunkards. One teacher remarked, "if you are not teaching well in your class, the results of PMT will show and at the SPAM, you will feel embarrassed" (Teacher, Bagire Primary school). Another said you will feel "paralysed" if the parents are pointing to you for non-performance.

Teacher's Recognition of Child Performance

Kassena-Nankana revealed that the Head teachers were unable to report to parents on their child's performance on a regular basis. Interviews with Head teachers and teachers revealed that due to the Distance Education Programme teachers were not able to find extra time to fill out the report card forms for children; some head teachers complained that the number of trained teachers in the school were not enough and that those who were untrained teachers were unwilling to fill out the reports..

"*For ten years we have not been given report cards but they used to on vacation days call parents and announce the results of the pupils which is very disgraceful because it also effects the parents… this has been embarrassing for parents and children…*"

Table 15: Differences in Performance Reporting across the Two Study Districts

Talensi-Nabdam	Kassena-Nankana
Give and they common terminal test	Terminal school based testing (internal)
Report cards are given (Bagire)	Not all schools give out terminal report cards especially rural schools and some urban schools;
PTA meetings 2x terminal, rank performance and compile	No ranking and no compiling of the results and tests. Papers but the results are not of a high standard
teachers rank the children and share results which are posted on the board	Children have to compare their own tests (Sembu).

6.4   Pupil Assessment of Quality Learning at the School Level

Despite the Head teachers hovering around the school classrooms in some schools while focal group discussions were taking place, children were bold enough to talk about instances of sexual abuse of girls and corporal punishment which they claim occurs on a regular basis. In all of the nine LCD and non-LCD schools children spoke of the problem of attendance of teachers particularly in the KN area. Children also spoke of the problems of teacher attendance but emphasised the problem of lack of text books.

Table 16: Pupil Assessment of learning at school

	Anaanore Primary School P6 Boys (non Link, KND)	Alagba P6 Girls (Link, KND)
Changes in the school over the last few years	"our parents have provided a mud building for a JHS… parents also transplanted trees on the school compound. Teachers are very few than from before… "There has also been a decrease in enrolment due to the feeding programme being phased out…"	Over the last two years teachers did not make us fetch water but now teachers make us fetch water and nothing is given to us…
LCD provides…	" We have more exercise books given to us by parents"	We have more furniture now… LCD provides furniture, books, pens, bags, sandals and uniforms for children. They also give special grants for projects…
What more changes do you want in your school?	"We want more textbooks in all subjects.. a provision of a bore hole for water; more teachers provided, provide a JHS block and KG block"	"We want more textbooks in all subject and teachers to be punctual and serious in teaching us regularly…"

The key factors related to improving quality appeared to come together in the Talensi-Nabdam district… a synergy between the parents taking more of an interest in their child's learning, an investment in the school and teachers being held accountable for results were forcing a change at the classroom level. This was also supported by the increased qualitative monitoring and support provided by the CSs in the district which enhanced the culture of teaching.

Other Interventions in the School

It is however important to note that almost all the schools visited had had some intervention from other NGOs which were either rolled out or are still running. We discovered that some schools have as many as eight NGOs or donor interventions of which some are ongoing. They include school feeding programmes (WFP, Government of Ghana, CRS), in service training programmes (JICA, CRS QUEPs, USAID EQUALL), sensitisation workshops (Censudi, Action Aid, EQUAL etc) and direct sponsorship support for children (Action Aid, World Vision etc). The outcomes at the community and school levels may be as a result of these interventions. The collective effort of these NGOs working in different areas of education development in the community and school can not be over emphasised. However, what is staggering to learn

was the sheer isolation in which these NGOs work. There is no evidence of collaboration and networking at either the school or community level. Some of the NGOs' activities amount to duplication. Table A11 and A12 in the annex shows the number of NGOs and their intervention in schools in KND and TND.

Conclusions

The best evidence that the team could gather about the learning going on the classroom level and the degree of change in quality over the last three years were gleaned from interviews with the P6 girls and P6 boys along with their parents and teachers. These interviews enabled the team to ask children questions about the "the things they liked and did not like about their school and classroom." They were also asked about the changes they had experienced in the classrooms and what had brought about these changes. Despite having previously conducted numerous qualitative research exercises in Ghana members of the team were still sometimes shocked to find how vocal and forthright the children in the Upper East Region can be.
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At the school level, the PMT and SPAMs process was found to be contributing immensely to the improvement in planning, involvement of other stakeholder and accountability in school management. The direct outcomes and impact of this is improvement in quality education delivery and consequently enhancement of pupils' performance. Since this was done in both Link and non-Link schools, it had the potential of permeating quality measures in planning at different levels from district, circuit and school levels.

On financial and data management, Link was successful in fusing good data and financial management skills in Head teachers in Link schools but the transfer of Head teachers does not guarantee the sustainability of this process in the school. This was evident in Kessena-Nakana District. Link should frequently train Head teachers and probably consider training all the Head teachers across the district.

The performance of teachers and community-school relationships was directly dependent on leadership (leader at the district, circuit and school levels). Where there was strong Head teacher leadership, there was improved teacher performance and hence enhanced quality teaching and learning in the school. On the other hand where leadership was weak, teacher performance was poor and quality of education suffered. The LCD assessment revealed that parents were well sensitised and were demanding quality education for their children; where is the accountability of teachers was weak as a result of teacher non-performance, school-community relation were bitter.

Chapter 7: Learning Outcomes at Child Level

An important measure as to whether the SPR and even the LSP processes were effective in bringing about change at the school and community levels relates to the impact at the child level. In the last chapter we attempted to look at how the LCD programme was improving quality at the school level in Link schools and non Link schools across the two districts. Here we focus on the results of the SPR itself to assess the change over time in the PMT results in the districts between LCD and non LCD schools by taking a sample of the schools across all the circuits in two districts where data was available (Talensi and Bolga Districts).

7.1 Performance of children

The LCD's SPR process is geared towards quality delivery of education. Indicators used to assess pupil cognitive achievement are through the organization of the PMT. In all three districts (Bolga, Talensi, and Kassena) where LCD is operating, PMT has been organized for both LCD and non-LCD schools. In addition, LCD has provided LCD schools with TLMS, grant support to some Link schools to implement their SPIPs, and support to Circuit Supervisor and other district supervisory activities. Head teachers have received training in financial management, planning and record keeping; teachers have been trained in lesson notes planning, preparation and delivery and class management. To assess the impact of the LCD programme on pupil cognitive achievement, performance of pupils in LCD school was compared with that of non-LCD school. PMT testing is usually administered at P3 and P6 levels for English and Mathematics.

A comprehensive set of results of the PMT was made available for analysis from the Talensi-Nabdam district planner for 2006 and 2007. A comprehensive set of results was not available for one of the PMT cycles from the Kassena-Nankana District due to the results being lost from a computer virus infestation. Consequently comparison of the performance of the two types of school could not be made in this district. Compressive results of Kassena for 2007 have not been made available.

Comparing PMT results of Link and non-Link schools does not give a completely decisive picture of the impact of Link programmes. This is because many of LCD programmes including PMTs, SPAMs, and the fuelling of CSs to improve monitoring, etc cover non-Link school as well. A better measure would have been a trend analysis however given that the PMTs were only conducted twice in this district there are limitations on the team's ability to use PMT data trends over time. The same comparison may not be possible in Kassena-Nankana even if the data set was available since the first PMT was conducted in mainly Link schools and the second PMT (2008/09) was conducted in mainly non-Link schools.

7.2   Pupil Performance Trends across the Evaluative Districts

It is still early days to be judging the performance of children and comparing non LCD with LCD schools using performance monitoring trends over the last three years. This evaluation recognized that although there is a high degree of interest in making school change and quality improvements generated after PMT testing results are released through the SPAMs at school, circuit and district level…change takes time particularly in relation to learning outcomes among children. The best international research on the issue of assessing learning outcomes suggests that learning improvements can take up to three or more years when interventions similar to the SPR are put in place (QUIPS Evaluation, 2004).

The PMT results from the sampled LCD and non LCD schools indicate that there is a significant improvement in child performance in English at P3 level.

Figure 3:

English P3 PMT Results for sampled Link and non-school in Talensi-Nabdam district

	2006	2007
Link Schools	10.53	31.22
Non-Link Schools	9.99	20.39
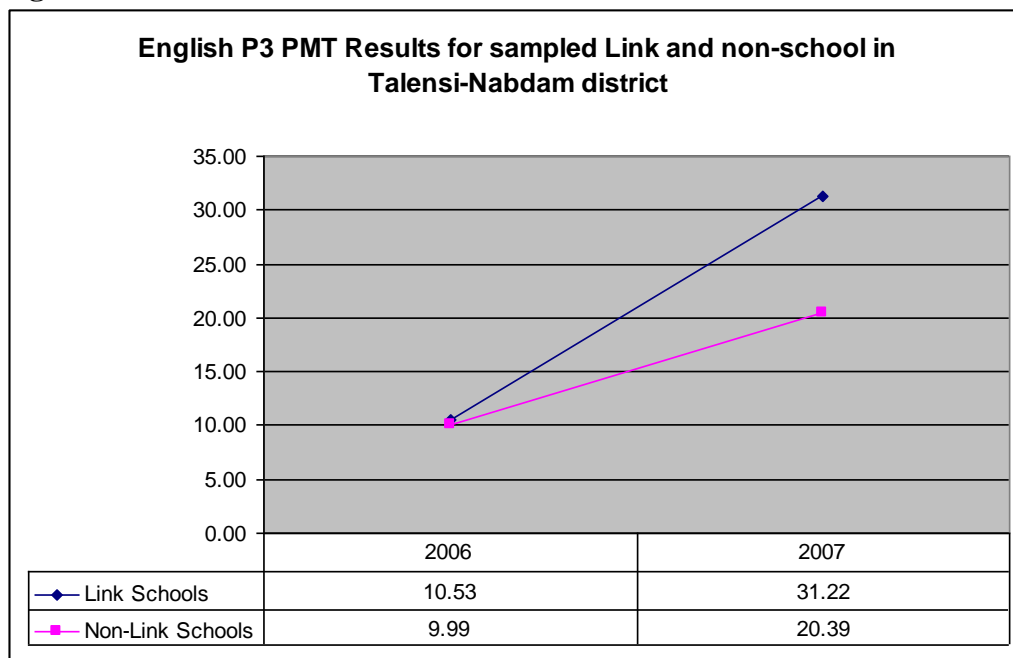
In Talensi-Nabdam District, a comparison of the two years of PMTs shows that there has been tremendous improvement in performance by primary three pupils in English over the two PMTs conducted (2006 and 2007). Interesting to note is that there was no difference in performance in the first PMT results (2006) between Link and non-Link schools but a steady improvement by both Link and non Link Schools with Link schools outperforming non Link schools in the district. Figure 3 above shows that there has been remarkable improvement among P3 learners in English between the two rounds of testing. This could be a result of the SPAM meetings between parents and teachers to consult on how school performance could be improved, the stronger supervision by the District Education offices and quality improvements in the school. Interviews with the

DDE of Talensi-Nabdam suggested that the results from the 2006 PMT stimulated change at all levels and the District put in several measures to ensure higher degrees of supervision and quality support to teachers.

Figure 4:

2007 PMT Results for Sampled Link and Non- Link Schools in Talensi-Nabdam District

	English- P3	Math- P3	English- P6	Math- P6
Link Schools	31.22	46.60	31.87	31.06
Non-Link Schools	20.39	34.73	30.74	28.53
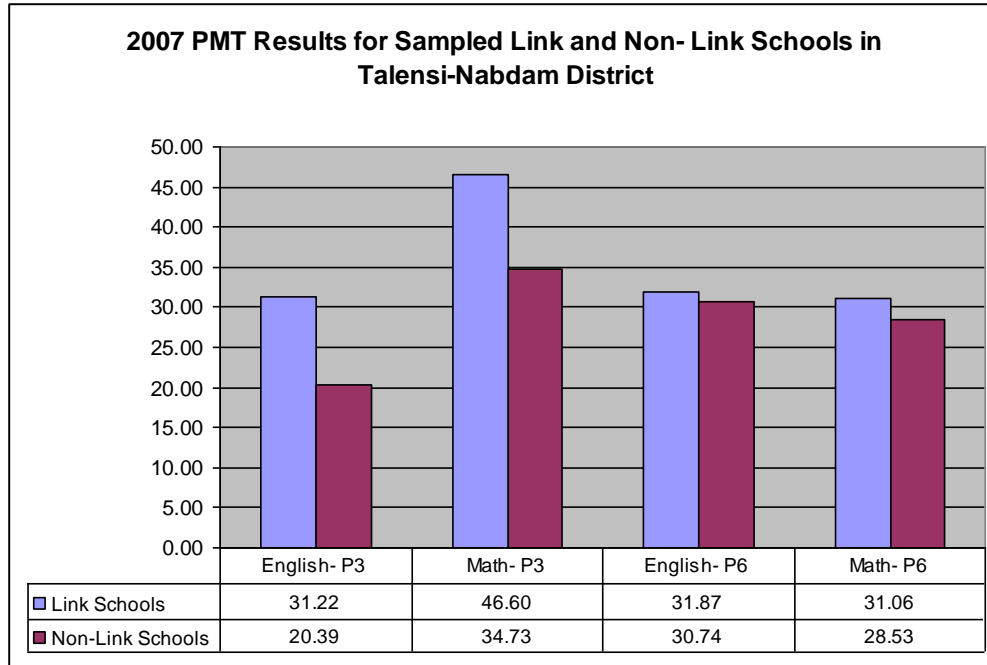
The differences in performance across the two subjects--English and Mathematics suggests that children in LCD schools were outperforming their non LCD school counterparts. Figure 4 reveals that child performance in both mathematics and English was higher in Link compared to non-Link schools at primary three and six levels.

Talensi witnessed a consistent improvement in the overall performance of LCD schools compared to non-LCD schools. In 2006, the average performance of LCD school was 32.13% which improved to 35.19% (*see figure 5 below*). Comparatively, non LCD schools scored 28.63% in 2006 with the performance level remaining close to the same at 28.60 in 2007. Talensi District has demonstrated that LCD school performance in PMT shows a consistent growth and improvement. The under-performance of non-LCD schools seemed to have stagnated. This could mean that the other interventions which Link schools receive are important supplements to the SPR process on its own. Some of these additional quality interventions include the Head teacher training, the exchange programmes to the UK which motivate the teachers, and the provision of school grants/TLMs.

Figure 5:

PMT Results for Sampled Link and Non-Link schools in Talensi-Nabdam District

	2006	2007
■ Link schools	32.13	35.19
■ Non-Link schools	28.63	28.60

Legend: ■ Link schools ■ Non-Link schools
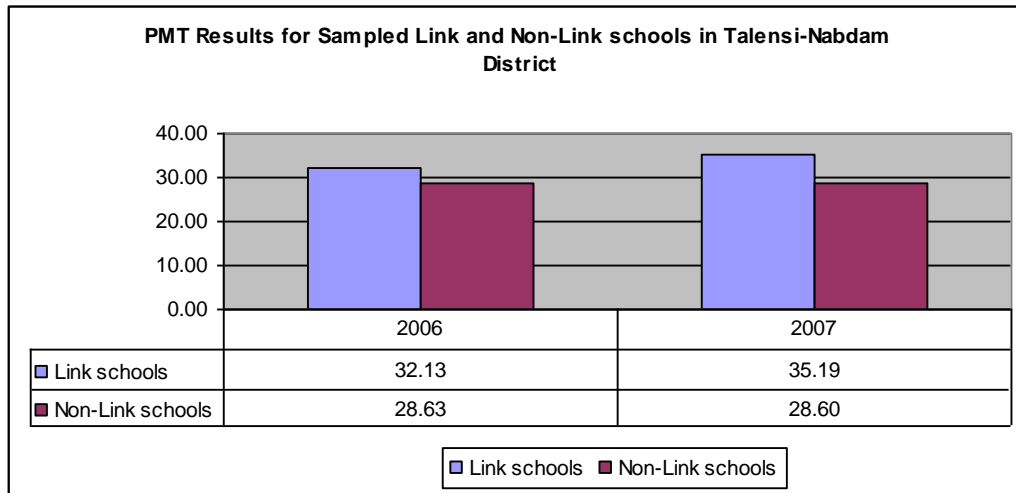
In 2006, Talensi LCD P3 had an average score of 10.53% and non-LCD had 9.99%. In 2007 the performance of LCD pupils improved as a score of 31.22% was recorded as against 20.39% in non-LCD schools. The LCD P3 pupils performed better in English than their counterparts in non-LCD schools. The P6 English score in LCD schools in 2006 was 40.13% as compared with 29.64% in non-LCD schools. In 2006 mathematics results, P3 pupils in LCD schools had 43.59% as against 45.17% for non- LCD schools.

Figure 6:

2006 PMT Results for Sampled Link and Non-Link Schools in Talensi-Nabdam District

	English- P3	Math- P3	English- P6	Math- P6
■ Link Schools	10.53	43.59	40.13	34.26
■ Non-Link Schools	9.99	45.17	29.64	29.67

Legend: ■ Link Schools ■ Non-Link Schools
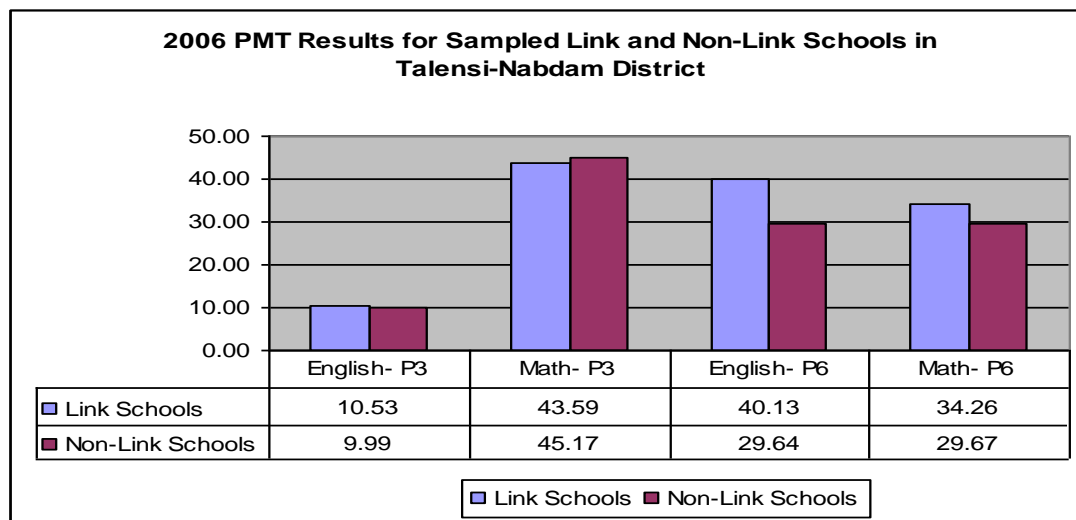
In 2007, the Talensi-Nabdam LCD School Performance English scores plummeted to 31.87%. The non-LCD school score was 30.74% for English. The P6 pupils in LCD schools did better than those in non-LCD schools. Generally the LCD schools performed better in English than the non-LCD schools.

In 2007, the LCD P3 pupils improved their performance in Maths at 46.60% compared with the non-LCD score of 34.73%. Comparatively, LCD pupils' performance in Maths was better than their non-LCD counterparts. The P6 pupils in LCD schools scored 34.26% in Mathematics as compared with 29.70% for non-LCD schools. In 2007, LCD schools recorded a score of 31.06% registering a marginal reduction. The non-LCD schools also recorded a reduction in performance at 28.53% compared to the 2006 findings.

In Bolga, English scores for P3 pupils in LCD schools in 2006 was 11.15% compared with 12.73% in non LCD schools. Performance in English for P6 pupils in LCD schools was 49.7% as compared with 48.97 in non-LCD schools. The performance in non-LCD schools was marginally better at P3 compared to P6. A mathematics score of 37.17% was recorded for P3 pupils in LCD schools in 2006 as against 38.22% in non-LCD schools. In P6 the LCD pupils' performance in Mathematics was 37.17% compared to 41.29% for P6 levels. These results demonstrate that in both Maths and English non-LCD pupils performed marginally better than LCD pupils in Bolga.

Considering the performance of the LCD and non-LCD schools, the non-LCD schools improved marginally better than the LCD schools with 35.96% as against 34.33% overall. When all levels of performance of LCD schools are compared with non-LCD schools in Talensi and Bolga, the LCD programme schools performed consistently better based on the PMT results. The LCD score is 33.23% as against 32.30% in non-LCD schools across the two districts.

Using the PMT Results to Make a Change

District Education Officer interviews across the two evaluation districts indicated different levels of knowledge and interest concerning the means for tracking performance of children at the district level. The frequency and number of SPR cycles of intervention was a factor in stimulating change related to child performance at the district level. More importantly than the frequency and number of SPRs was the degree to which the District Education Director and senior staff had learned that performance monitoring testing among children and schools could increase the demand for quality education. For instance in Talensi-Nabdam where performance of children was high, the district was focused on using common terminal examinations on a district basis as a means to continuing to test children, and rank and rate schooling performance. They were also using PTA meetings as a means of sharing the common ranking with their Head teachers and teachers and parents. The team also found a high level of regular student assessment procedures being used by the teachers to give feedback to their parents (e.g. through the terminal report cards, posting of examination results at the school and PTA meetings with the parents).

This was in contrast to the Kassena-Nankana District where District Education Officers at senior (ADs and members of the SMT) and intermediate levels (CSs) did not have any systematic way of tracking performance in schools across the district and were only

beginning to use a common JSS mock exam introduced by the new Regional Director (the outcomes of which will be discussed in further detail in the next section).

More important than the PMT data findings themselves was the recognition by the Head teacher that the PMT results for schools could be of some use. Unfortunately PMT data was not easily accessible in most of the eight schools visited and it was not something that the Head teachers were using on a continuous basis to track/ judge their performance. Most of the schools visited may have had one and at most two PMTs conducted in their schools over the last three years (since 2006) but more regular PMTs on a yearly basis were needed to instil the need to reflect on PMT results after the SPAM process was completed.

Interviews with SMC's, PTA's and parents indicated that they all remembered the ranking of their schools across the districts even when the SPAM intervention had taken place over two years ago. The more immediate issue was whether or not teachers were showing up to the classrooms and in most cases in Kassena-Nankana District where the SPR had taken place in schools in 2008/09 this was not the case. The findings from Kassena-Nankana suggest that the accountability chain was not working from the district downwards or from the school upwards due to intimidation by Circuit Supervisors, Heads teachers and trained teachers along with the in action of the District Office and Circuit Supervisors to take quick and immediate interventions for non performing teachers. PMT testing and the SPR process within this context was important but not enough to ensure positive action by both the district education offices and teachers.

7.3   Enrolment and Retention Trends across the Evaluative Study Areas

Access Trends across LCD and non LCD Schools

One of the LCD objectives is to improve quality of education which will translate into increased school enrolment and retention. It is expected that as quality and performance improves pupils and parents will in the long run see increasing returns to education resulting in higher enrolment and retention rates.

The impact of the LCD programme on enrolment has been assessed in Talensi-Nabdam and Kassena-Nankana districts based on data provided by the District Education Directorates. Enrolment growth analysis has been made by randomly sampling and comparing LCD and non-LCD schools across the circuits in each district. It has been realized that even though there have been significant Government and other donor interventions in the districts (e.g. Capitation grants, school feeding etc), the LCD initiatives have contributed to enrolment growth in schools and circuits. In the two districts, statistical analysis points to enrolment growth in both LCD and non LCD schools.

In Kassena-Nankana District, enrolment trends over the four years using thirty-four (34) LCD schools and thirty-four (34) non-LCD schools have been compared. Enrolment data of LCD schools indicate that between 2004 and 2007, enrolment increased from 10,902

to 12,329, indicating an annual growth rate of 4.2%. In non LCD schools, enrolment rose from 9394 in 2004 to 11,611 in 2007 with an enrolment growth rate of 7.3%. In 2004 the LCD schools experienced a rapid growth which slackened in 2006 and picked up again in 2007. A similar trend can be found in non LCD schools which experienced an increased enrolment between 2004 and 2005 which dropped in 2006 and increased again in 2007.

Figure 7:

Enrolment in Sampled Link and Non-Link schools in KND

	2004	2005	2006	2007
Male(Link)	5319	7028	6091	6350
Female (Link)	5445	6030	5977	5989
Male (Non-Link)	4838	6810	5885	6414
Female (Non-Link)	4556	5610	5389	5497
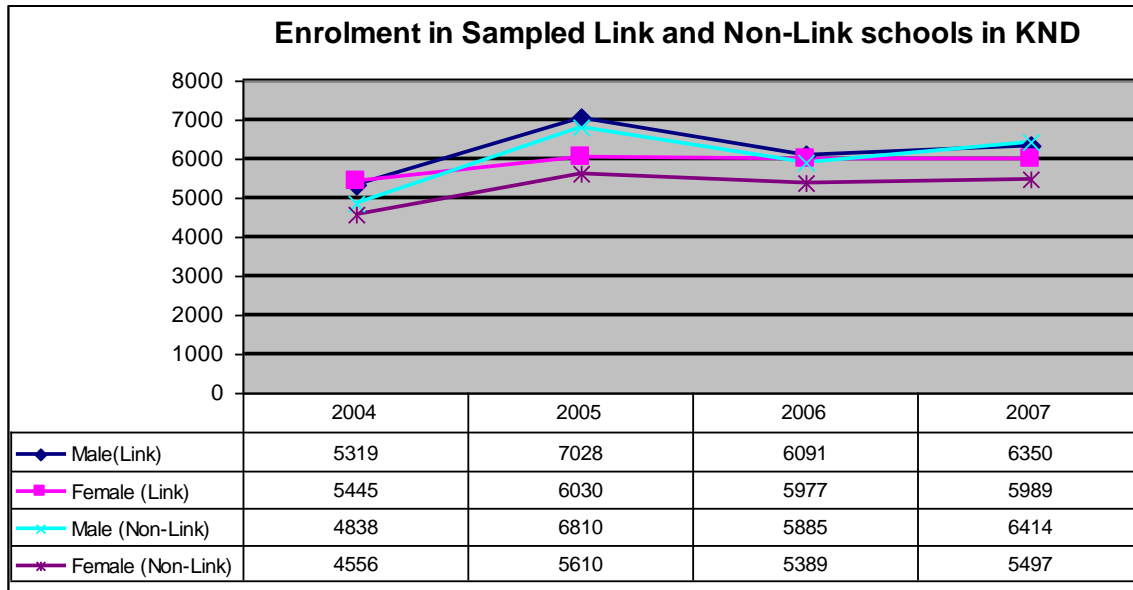
An analysis of sampled enrolment data from LCD and non-LCD schools in Kassena-Nankana District (KND) from 2004 to 2008 reveals that LCD schools have higher enrolment rates than non-LCD school as indicated in figure 7 above. Also, the gap between female and male enrolment was also wider in non-LCD than in LCD schools indicating that LCD schools are attracting more girls than boys over the life of their interventions. Interviews with parents in LCD schools suggested that the increased investment parents were making in the school due to the Link School Grant increases the parents' interest in sending their children, particularly their girl child, to school (see Chapter 5 for details on cultural transformation).

In Talensi-Nabdam, enrolment data covering 2005 and 2008 indicated that the annual enrolment growth rate improved in both LCD and non-LCD schools. In eleven (11) LCD sampled schools, enrolment increased from 5049 in 2005 to 5479 in 2008 with an annual growth of about 2.8% over the period. In eleven (11) non-LCD schools, a similar growth rate was recorded. In 2005, enrolment (3474) increased to 4485 in 2008 with an annual growth rate 8.9%. In both LCD and non-LCD schools, total enrolment of 3523 rose to 9964 with growth rate of 5.8%

Figure 8:

Enrolment rates for Link and Non-Link Schools in TND	2005	2006	2007	2008
◆ Male(Link)	2731	2393	2760	2929
■ Female (Link)	2500	2375	2466	2550
✕ Male (Non-Link)	1927	2065	2292	2361
✳ Female (Non-Link)	1447	1833	1996	2124
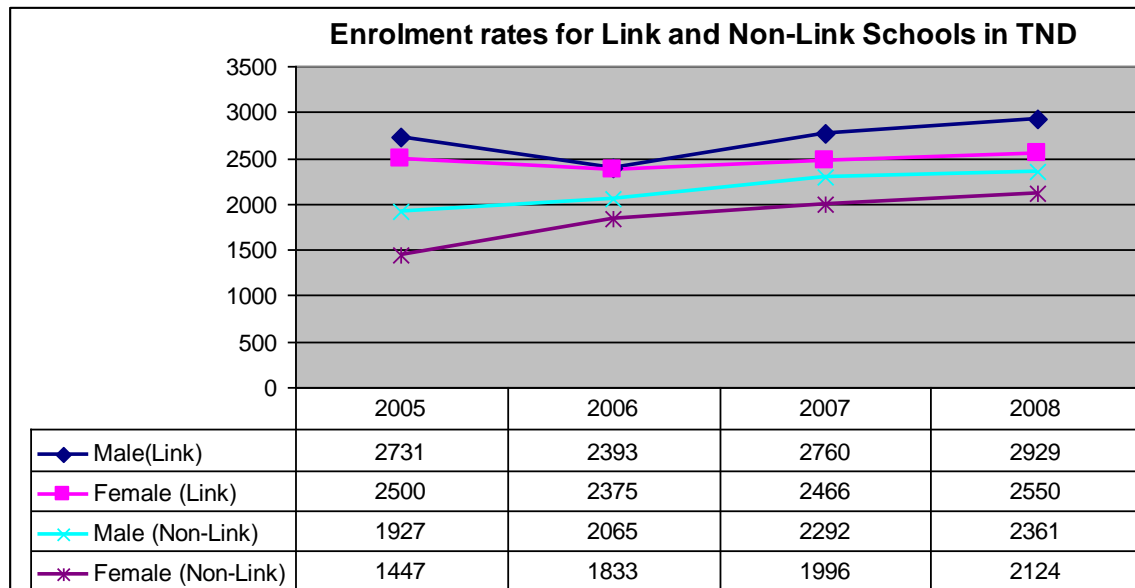
Gender disaggregated enrolment data from Talensi-Nabdam indicates the closing of the gender gap between 2005 and 2006 which has started to widen over the last two years. This might be as a result of the withdrawal of other donor and NGO programmes such as the CRS school feeding programme and WFP girls' incentive package programme which were being implemented in Talensi-Nabdam.

Is it worth noting that there have been a significant number of government, donor and NGOs supported programmes operating across the two districts prior and during LCD interventions. Recent results from a Girls Education Strategy study by the SNV and Ibis[9] suggest that it is a combination of girls' education interventions which are making enrolment and retention trends change on a district basis. Some of these interventions include the provision of bicycles for girls, improvement of school infrastructure and TLMs, food rations, the supply of incentive packages, and sponsorship schemes for girls. A combination of these interventions added to the LCD interventions could explain the improvement in enrolment rates over the period.

BECE results

BECE results for the three focal districts in the Upper East Region also suggest that children across the three focal LCD districts are performing consistently better as they reach the last stage of basic education see Annex 1).   The Regional Director placed the success of improved BECE results across some of the districts particularly Talensi-Nabdam on the impact of the LCD work. Meetings with Directors of Education across four districts in the Upper East Region including two LCD focal districts and two non-LCD district suggests that there have been other factors which have also contributed to

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[9] This study is about to be released and will be available on www.associatesforchange.org

improvement of BECE results within the Districts. These include the strategies which District Education Directors put in place to ensure accountability of the Circuit Supervisors in monitoring and supervision of teachers, and the sanctions for non-performing CSs and teachers (e.g. demotion). At the grassroots level the performing districts also have empowered and enabled parents to place pressure on district education structures through their SMC's/PTA's.

Conclusions

The evaluation revealed that quality education which encompasses regular teacher attendance and better pupil performance is directly related to higher enrolment, and retention, particularly among girls in schools. Performance monitoring testing across the LCD and non-LCD schools in both districts suggested that performance has improved dramatically between the two cycles of the SPR. The results also suggest that LCD schools are able to perform better in terms of English and Maths compared to their non-LCD counterparts. This is particularly true for the lower primary for P3 in English which might be a result of the pedagogic approaches to literacy (i.e. phonic and syllabic). Enrolment trends in both LCD and non-LCD schools have experienced reasonable improvement over the last four years. The results from the quantitative analysis suggest that Link schools may be in a better situation to improve enrolment and performance among children due to the additional interventions by LCD (e.g. quality, training and support to the schools).

Chapter 8: Organisational Development and Capacity Building of LCD

LCD Ghana started in 1999 as a relatively small international NGO supporting only a few communities with the Link School Programme (LSP). In 2004 there were significant changes brought about by a new director and with a new vision for quality improvement by increasing the capacity of districts to effect their own changes in improving quality education using the SPR approach. The new LCD strategies which involved the usage of a capacity building approach at the district level and the SPR programme led by District Education Offices demanded a technical supportive role for LCD.

By 2007 the programme scaled up to the BAK area in Ashanti Region due to the relocation of the LCD head office to Kumasi. As Link grew so did its staff and funding base with the British Lotto Grant being LCD Ghana's key source of financing between 2006 and 2009. As this funding comes to an end (June, 2009), the organisation has been focused for the last year on developing other funding sources which will enable it to maintain the existing scale of operation and independence in thinking, as well as consolidate the gains made in the districts where they work. Interaction with core staff in the Upper East regional office indicated that LCD is at a critical stage in its organisational development. The challenges in fundraising both within and outside Ghana are forcing LCD to look at its organizational identity and scale of operations.

8.1   Core Values and Identity

LCD has evolved several core values which are apparent in all their documentation. LCD values the importance of empowering the people they work with through strong collaboration, consultative processes and a commitment to information sharing and capacity building through their "insider out" approach. Other core values which are reflected in their work and were identified through the staff self-assessment include:

- Education as a fundamental human right and a key to breaking the cycle of poverty;
- Working with the structures of Government to achieve sustainability change;
- Transparency and ability to openly share information and promote collaboration and networking, and learning in an environment of integrity, quality and mutual respect.

The status of an international NGO has allowed LCD to receive funding directly from international sources based in the UK as well as providing them with a network of partner countries where lesson learned have been shared and used to directly influence the quality of their programming. The SPR process is an example of an approach which evolved through the close collaboration between the Ghana Programme Director, Uganda and South Africa.

8.2   External Relations, Collaboration and Influence

Interviews with several NGO and Government stakeholders at regional and national level confirmed that LCD has been attempting to share its findings with a broad range of stakeholders through existing coalitions and networks such as the Northern Network for Development (NNED) and Ghana National Education Coalition Campaign (GNECC). LCD is a member of the Technical Committee of GNECC and regularly contributes to GNECC and NNED's work on a regional and national basis. LCD has also been helping NNED strengthen the work of the District Education for All (DEFATs) in the Upper East Region of Ghana. These are district level civil society representatives who are set up to provide advocacy and monitoring support to education development at the district level.

LCD has also demonstrated its interest and commitment to using the information it generates to advocate for better quality education at the highest level forums organized by the Ministry of Education each year. In 2008/09 LCD represented the Ashanti Region at the Annual Education Sector Review[10]. It has also held numerous dissemination workshops sponsored by LCD and other national level stakeholders to share its findings and best practices with a broad range of stakeholders. These include:

- Participation in Annual National Education Sector Reviews
- Submission of terminal reports to the GES Directors at the national levels including PBME and Basic Education Division
- Inclusion of senior and retired education policy makers on its Board of Directors
- Organization of annual dissemination seminars for all national stakeholders including donors
- Presentations to individual stakeholders and partners on a regular basis
- Demonstration of commitment to information sharing particularly in relation to improving quality education across Ghana and abroad.

The Ministry of Education through the Planning Budget, Monitoring and Evaluation (PBM) Unit has taken interest in the work of LCD. The Unit has asked LCD to share its approach with donor agencies that are working in building capacities of Government and civil society organizations and pushing a transparency and accountability agenda within the education sector (e.g. USAID and GAITT). LCD has also been asked to share best practices with other LCD countries which are in the process of setting up their programmes (e.g. Ethiopia).

There has been close collaboration between LCD and its district and regional counterparts particularly those working on the planning and statistics functions of these education offices. Interviews with District Directors across the Upper East Region in non LCD districts and the Regional Director of Education suggest that LCD has made significant strides in sharing its best practices with others who are interested. The Regional Director was very impressed with the technical capacities of LCD to improve quality education in the districts in the Upper East Region and attributed the

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[10] LCD is a lead partner of GNECC in Ashanti.

improvement in Talensi-Nabdam district to its efforts. This was confirmed in the Talensi-Nabdam District Annual Performance Report for the district. The Upper East Regional Director of Education suggested that LCD be asked to host an annual review forum with all their district education partners to review their progress, share lessons learned and best practice on a regular basis. This would be an excellent way to scale up its programme within the Upper East Region and should be considered as a regular activity of TENI.

More work is needed to forge linkages with the EMIS departments at the national and regional levels. Interviews with the National EMIS Coordinator suggest that very little information has been shared at this level (EMIS Data Unit) within the MOE to ensure closer collaboration in the roll out of the SPR process.

LCD has also demonstrated its ability to collaborate with other NGO's through its long collaboration with VSO in Ghana. This has involved both the placement of volunteers and the development of a higher quality of placements in the areas of teacher support, as well as building the capacity of districts to better manage quality change within the districts. The LCD and VSO collaboration has been mutually beneficial particularly in the areas of supporting schools to produce and use teaching learning materials, improving circuit supervisor performance and improving their pedagogical approaches to literacy.

8.3   Governance and Decision Making

The self-assessment provided to staff at the Ashanti and Upper East regional offices suggest that there is a very consultative and open approach to governance and decision making within LCD Ghana through the leadership of the Programme Director. What appears more challenging is the governance and decision making systems at the international level. The interviews with in–country staff demonstrated the need for LCD to give more thought to its future direction and ensure that staff at every level are able to be more involved and understand processes of decision making. This is particularly pertinent at the international level where decisions impacts on LCD, Ghana. This shared vision of the future direction of LCD Ghana appears critical to ensuring staff retention. and empowering staff to take an active role in fundraising efforts to sustain the organisation.

One necessary area of review for LCD internationally is the degree to which it allows its Ghana staff to lead decisions related to staffing and fundraising activities. More independence in fundraising efforts was being advocated at the regional level while efforts at national level to collaborate with US based partners was a very important aspect of the strategic plans for LCD. It appears critical for LCD Ghana to take some time to develop a collaborative strategic plan with its Ghana staff and international partners.

Since its inception the LCD Programme Director has made numerous efforts to involve the highest levels of government in its governance, operation and plans. Interviews with the Country Director revealed that the very inception of the LCD programme involved

consultation with the GES Director General (Acheampong) who guided LCD to begin working in the Upper East Region in close collaboration with the Whole School Development Programme (WSD). The LCD Board is made up of several well known educationalists including Rosina Acheampong (the ex GES Director General) and Charles Tsegah the current Director of PBME within the MOE.

8.4   Human Resource Development Systems

The evaluation team found that there was recognition by LCD staff that the organisation was at a stage of expansion and scaling up but sometimes at the expense of having the proper systems in place. Interviews with core programme staff in the Upper East Region revealed a strong recognition that decisions to use the financing for more than the specified project districts under the District Education Development Project (DEDP) had stretched LCD's capacity to implement. However at the same time this had resulted in districts finding ways to support the LCD efforts through their own financing. For instance during the last SPR (2008/09) Talensi-Nabdam and Kassena-Nankana districts had both made significance financial and human resource contributions towards the SPR roll out since LCD was not able to provide all the financing. The LCD staff along with the District Education Officers had worked together to ensure that the 2008/09 SPR programme was implemented at the district and community level despite the limited financing.

The interviews with core LCD programme staff indicated that some "unplanned" expansion had stretched the staff to their limits and more planning was needed to maximize these efforts in future. Staff also suggested that more regular retreats to reflect on practices and to build their competencies and capacities were needed. Core project management staff suggested that they needed more training in the following areas to enhance their performance;
- Management information systems and data management
- Updated software training for data analysis (e.g. SPSS)
- Financial management training

An interview with the Programme Director Dr Quaigran indicated that systems are being put in place to formalize the HRD systems within LCD. He described the staffing systems as open and informal with contracts coming to an end without proper procedures for renewal. Dr Quaigran explained with the planned changes within LCD to expand operations, there would be a need to formalize staffing procedures and ensure that all staff were given proper contracts with a time horizon based on the project duration. He also mentioned that an international staff handbook laying out procedures and policies was also developed and that Ghana staff would be consulted in the near future on how this applied in country.

8.5   Management Information Systems

One of the weakest areas of the entire Organisational Assessment of LCD is management information systems particularly at a regional and district level. Although the Bolga offices did demonstrate capacity to find the data which was requested by the evaluation team, very little SPR data was readily available at the LCD offices in the Northern Region. Part of the reason for this gap has been that the LCD has made efforts to build the capacity of district offices to store and manage their own data sets but this has led to loss of important data which will be needed if LCD is to demonstrate impact in the long run.   Evaluative information audits at the district education and the LCD offices demonstrated very weak storage and retrieval systems particularly when it came to the Performance Monitoring Data for the last three years. Talensi-Nabdam district was in a better situation to provide the team with copies of data sets generated during the two cycles of their SPR processes but Kassena-Nankana District could not produce the following core data sets: PMT data, copies of the EMIS data generated and analysed and copies of the school based SPR forms. Given the culture of data management in Ghana, it is essential for the LCD office in Bolgatanga to keep all relevant copies of the documentation in order to back stop and ensure that this valuable data bank is well kept for future usage.

Interviews with core LCD staff and the self-evaluation also suggests the need for more training in MIS at all levels particularly within the SPR process. District Planning and EMIS officers should also be provided with systematic training on managing simple data banks particularly given the growing pool of data required at the district since the inception of the Annual Education performance, monitoring, and reporting systems by MOE.

The evaluation team through observation at the district level and the information audit conducted as part of the evaluation at LCD and district education offices suggests that more funding is needed to ensure that adequate computer hard ware including back up systems are in place to support the SPR and MIS systems to ensure long term sustainability. There is a clear need for LCD to invest in a web based storage systems for archiving data in the future and to for long term retention of data. Planning and statistics officers at the district level along with LCD core staff need more up to date computers in order to ensure data storage in the short term and basic systems of backing up and storage in the medium term. There is a need for a regional or Ghana based MIS person to support LCD's work across the country. This could be a volunteer based position for someone with high level technical skills in MIS and data management.

8.6   Strategic Planning and Organisational Expansion

LCD has several different planning activities which help to guide their operational activities including an annual operational planning workshop which brings together LCD staff from across the country on a regular basis… *"The annual operational plans are developed at the organizational level. Then it is presented at management meetings for deliberations corrections, addition and acceptance. Staff then prepare individual*

terminal plans (based on LCD self evaluation responses from PD)." One of the important strengths of LCD's work in Ghana has been their ability to "plan for activities based on experiences and lessons learnt from other sister countries". A good example of this is the development of the SPR process which originated from South Africa, was refined in Ghana, and then reintroduced in other African countries (Ethiopia).

Over the last year LCD has developed a strategic planning document linked to its fundraising efforts which will help LCD Ghana and its international partners source longer term financing. The proposal which was developed to secure core financing for 2009 to 2014 provides the direction and activities to build the organizational capacity of LCD to expand and develop. The proposal is to assist LCD International source support for "unrestricted" funding in order for LCD to build its capacities and prepare for a larger scale programme. The idea is that core financing would be raised up to around 300,000 USD in order to secure staff salaries, training and offices while other fundraising efforts would support specific projects targeted at districts level. This would also assist LCD "leverage funding" if bids demand co financing arrangements as do some USAID grants. Interviews with senior LCD staff also suggest that future work with SPR at the district level will require matching funds by DEOs to support their efforts in order to ensure ownership and sustainability over the long term. These efforts demonstrate that LCD has been attempting to find ways to build a long term vision and secure financing for its activities over the long term.

8.7   Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

The evaluation team spent time with the northern office reviewing their monitoring and evaluation systems. Quarterly reports were reviewed along with other planning tools which were used to track progress of the SPR and LSP programmes at the district level. Another mechanism used to monitor the progress of the districts was the quarterly and monthly minutes of the senior management meetings held at the district education offices.

The findings from the evaluation suggest that monitoring of the programme was being driven by activity based reporting and more work was needed to ensure a logical framework or results based system of reporting was put in place. The activities of LCD were planned on a terminal and weekly basis with the main thrust of activities in the field being focused on the SPR roll out and the Link schools. There was no visible approach to monitoring school level performance apart from the circuit supervisors monthly or quarterly reports which were not available at the LCD offices. No evidence of regular monitoring could be found apart from the visits of LCD staff to the district education offices to attend the SMT meetings, support given to capacity building programmes, and the visits made to LCD schools to deliver letters and other information when the need arises.

A more performance oriented monitoring system to track key objectives and outcomes are needed. This lapse could also be a result of the lack of a monitoring framework or Log frame to guide the programme. A key instrument which should be developed by

LCD Ghana is the Results Based Management Framework which would be useful to identify the expected key impacts, outcomes and outputs related to its overall objectives and goals over the next five years[11]. Planning documents at the district education level should also be developed based on the school SPIP and circuit work plans to ensure that the CS monitoring is tied to the LCD monitoring and evaluation processes. The most fundamental tool will be the development of a District Implementation Plan for LCD's work in districts where it is currently operating and where it intends to scale up.

A key contribution which LCD could also make in its efforts to track performance among children, schools and education providers is to assist the districts develop a more comprehensive monitoring and evaluation approach to their own performance. As part of the SPR there should be ways to train key district education stakeholders in continuing to use the SPR data generated at the district level to track performance on a yearly basis. This could be achieved through more developed circuit and district planning tools and an annual education review process for all the schools in the district where they would report on their progress against key SPAM and SPIP benchmarks raised through the SPR process. This process could eventually be mainstreamed with more top down approaches to planning being used to report on progress at national level.

8.8   Financial Systems and Viability

LCD has been receiving progressively more financing between 100,000 (2000) and 410,000 USD (2008) over the ten years of operation. In 2009 its funding fell from 410,000 to 250,000 USD as the Big Lottery Fund financing came to an end (March, 2009). LCD has also demonstrated capacity to locally generate funds in Ghana by collaboratively working with other NGO's on securing project work (e.g. VSO TENI and USAID GRAIL project bid). It has also secured financing through other donor sources such as USAID, and the World Bank Small Grants to support its own programme vision.

A very cursory look at LCD financial procedures was observed during the evaluation in the Upper East Region. Banking and transfers of funds was assessed from a district education perspective and LCD staff perspective. The following findings were gleaned:

- LCD has a very centralized disbursement system which for the last nine years has required funds to be sent to the Upper East by cheque to the direct beneficiaries (Schools or Districts) and do not pass through a regional office bank account. A float has been provided to the UER LCD office in order to disburse small office running expenses. Accounting is carried out on a monthly basis with Programme Managers reporting to the Programme Director for funds received.

- Recently LCD has instituted a new banking system so that funds can be transferred through the bank to the UER office which has eased the problems of disbursement of the LCD grants etc. The LCD requires all school which it works with to open their own accounts and that both the head teacher and PTA/SMC

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[11]   This evaluation team developed a preliminary evaluative framework in order to identify indicators for the medium to long term impacts.

chairperson be signatories to these accounts. Finally the District Education offices have also been asked to open accounts into which the LCD funds are placed in order to track these processes.

There have been some challenges with these systems particularly in relation to the degree of transparency between LCD and the district education offices in relation to what it given to the office for the CSs etc. The budget officers at the districts offices interviewed had limited knowledge concerning LCD funds provided to their schools, teachers or circuit supervisors. The AD of Supervision was often the key person who had knowledge of the financial details of what was given to the circuit supervisors for the quarterly support for monitoring and supervision and capacity building workshops at the school level.

Over the years the stretching of the funds intended for SPR and limited financial support by the districts has reduced the number of schools which SPR can cover in a given year to about 50%. This has had a negative impact on the potential outcomes and synergies which were expected from the SPR process. It was originally intended to reach all the schools, and engage all the circuit supervisors and district education professionals in a process of improving educational quality.

Unpredictable core financing has had a negative impact to the organization capacity particularly with regard to staff moral. The evaluation team recognized that the staff are extremely committed and have made a difference to improving quality education in the districts where they operate. However the unstable financing source is a very negative factor which is currently impeding some of their work, and came up in the self-evaluation and interviews with staff. Another challenge which limited financing has posed on LCD's growth is the inability of the organisation to replace vital equipment needed for their work e.g. outdated computers in the Upper East office.

Interviews with staff across the country indicated that the financial constraints on the organization and the expansion phase which was funded with the British Lottery support have placed the organisation in a new phase of development. The programme management at all levels in Ghana were under stress attempting to secure more core financing to sustain expansion over the last year and for the next five years.

8.9   Conclusions

Several invitations by Government have enabled LCD to gradually build a level of visibility and rapport with key stakeholders within the MOE and the civil society community. LCD has gained a reputation for being a solid, reliable and committed organisation to educational development across the country. Interviews with the National, Regional and District Directors of Education confirmed the respect that senior officials have for LCD based on their professionalism, technical know-how and commitment. More work is needed to imbue in their regional and district staff the same levels of technical professionalism particularly in relation to data management.

LCD is in a critical stage of development. In order to expand its operations in a smooth and planned manner the securing of core financing for staff and management processes is critical. The strategic plans for its fundraising efforts internationally which can ensure that its own vision and approach are continued will be vital in the coming years. Cost sharing agreements and memorandum of understanding should be reviewed by LCD for sustaining its activities at the district and regional levels.

Chapter 9: LCD Cost Effectiveness, Sustainability and Mainstreaming

"The ownership of the project is in no doubt understood by our partners. From the onset LCD has made it clear its intention to be in a facilitative role and this is evident in all our activities with government agencies who in our case happen to be our main partner, Ghana Education Service (GES). We have continued to intensify our collaboration with GES and to develop an action plan for the implementation of the project. We ensured without failure that every intervention introduced by LCD goes through a rigorous process of buy-in from the district. The District has been very instrumental in planning with schools on the basis of accurate performance data. In the introduction of interventions like CS planning, SMT meetings, SPR, School development planning and community fundraising, time is invested into ensuring that the district understands the process, deems it to be beneficial and ready to make LCD take a back seat within a defined timeframe. We are highly confident that district staff will continue with the SMT meetings, CS meetings and SPR processes with reduced LCD support and even after the end of the project cycle. We have come very far with the transfer of responsibility and we communicate this through all activities unequivocally (LCD yearly report to the British Lottery Fund, 2008)".

9.1   Transfer of Responsibility and Sustainability

The evaluation team was constantly reminded that no matter what intervention LCD took at the district level,   the Districts were in the lead position or should have been. Through its work with the SMTs and its insistence on CS meetings and ongoing consultative processes, LCD was demonstrating a firm commitment to letting the key senior leadership at the District Education offices take the lead.   Reports from LCD and interactions from the DDE's themselves affirm that LCD was facilitating the process of educational transformation at district level; by working through the DEO it was achieving this in districts where leadership was functional and responsive. Minutes of meetings and feedback from senior management in Talensi-Nabdam demonstrated that LCD had managed to become a partner with the district and was trusted as a valuable advisor and supporter.   By acquiescing and making suggestions to the district top management concerning innovations which could gradually transform the district, and consulting openly concerning the performance of the district based on performance monitoring results, LCD was gradually teaching the districts to use data/research and information to inform decision making and take action.

Their approach in participating in Senior Management meetings and where necessary regularly monitoring the CS monthly meetings in the districts was an indication that they were using these as key vehicles for transformation. Unfortunately these vehicles were not strong in districts where the Director was autocratic and the staff were unable to take action unless the District Director was present.

9.2   History of Financing

LCD has been receiving core financing over the last three years through the British Lottery System. In 2004 the new Programme Director developed a concept of District Development Planning which was the basis for supporting districts implement the SPR processing their districts. This was supported through the BLS and funded for the last three years.   LCD is actively pursuing other funding to sustain and scale up its programme. Through its work with VSO they were able to win a grant with Comic Relief which will help to sustain and scale up their programme in two new districts across the UWR and the Northern Region. It is not certain how funding for the SPR will be sourced to support their ongoing programmes in Bolga and Kassena-Nankana Districts where they have been active for the last 9 years.

Another opportunity may be through the USAID supported GRAIL programme. This is a highly competitive bid. However if Link, together with one of its US partners, is successful they may be a key implementer in helping to scale up the SPR process in all the 53 most deprived districts in the country over a two year period. This would demand an extensive increase in their current staffing and require a large level of project management skill on the part of Link in order to ensure that the quality of its programme is not compromised by the scale and demands of the GRAIL programme.

9.3   LCD Resource Utilization

LCD has made attempts to utilize and maximize its funding by stretching its resources where possible to cover more districts in the last two years. This is evidenced by the scaling up of its SPR process from two LCD focal districts to cover one additional district (BAK)[12]. LCD has also demonstrated a level of cost effectiveness and transparency by including the costs of its SPR roll out in the reports of its work. On average District Budget officers estimated that in Bolga the cost of the SPR process, not including the EDUCOM conference, was within the range of GH¢9,000 to GH¢10,000[13].   The project documents suggest that the full cycle of an SPR not including all the LCD staff and support costs is approximately about USD10, 000 per district if 50 schools are covered. This means it cost about USD 200 per school to conduct an SPR which involves all stages including the PMT and the data collection and SPAM processes at all levels *(see annex 7 for details).* Given the results, outcomes and impact of the SPR process to date, the program is quite cost effective.

Interviews with the district offices suggest that they are paying between 50-60 Ghana pesewas per child to conduct the terminal tests across the district which in the case of Talensi-Nabdam where they have approx, 17999 pupils which has cost them 127.45 Ghana cedis. This means that they could easily add the PMT as a the final end of year test which would enable them to conduct two terms of common tests using their own test

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[12]   The new demarcation of Bolga into two districts was a natural split and does not constitute an additional District to LCD programme although some additional expenses would be incurred in training a larger team of enumerators.

[13]   The current US dollar is equivalent to about 1.3 Ghana Cedis.

items and then a PMT at the end of the year in order to compare their marks with other districts.

The audit reports of LCD also suggest that they have been cost effective in keeping their administrative costs (overheads) low in comparison to their programme delivery costs. Audit reports showed that the level of programme delivery compared to administrative costs is very low.

9.4   Cost Effectiveness

To enhance quality school inspection, training programmes by LCD have been tailored to update the skills of Circuit Supervisors. They have also been provided with fuel every week to ensure frequent school visits and inspection. Professional competencies of teachers and head teachers have been enhanced through systematic in-service training. Teachers have been exposed to the best practices in lesson notes preparation, delivery and class management. In view of school-based planning which the MOE/GES has introduced to schools for the utilisation of Capitation Grant, head teachers have been trained on planning and management skills.

In 2007, the LCD incurred an expenditure of GH¢ 25,040 in respect to SPR, PMT, District Support and school grants in Talensi-Nabdam district which had 8 circuits, and 53 primary schools with 18,147 pupils. The unit cost by circuit is estimated to be GH¢ 3,130; the unit cost per school is GH¢ 472.45; and the cost per child is estimated to be GH¢ 1.38 for conducting the entire SPR process.

Talensi-Nabdam District has adopted the PMT concept by substituting it with Common Terminal Exams for all pupils (Primary and JHS) in the district. The results are analysed and ranked by school and circuit. Table 17 below gives details of expenditure and the estimated unit cost. Talensi-Nabdam district spent GH¢ 10, 127.45 on the Terminal Examination in 2007/08. Estimated Unit Cost per circuit is GH¢ 1,265.93. Estimated unit costs per school and pupil stand at GH¢ 191.08 and GH¢ 0.56 respectively. The district is currently charging each child approx. 0.50 Ghana pesewas to participate in the test each term.

Table17: Unit Cost of LCD Programme Activities Based on Actual Expenditure by District

Activity	Actual expenditure (Gh¢)	Circuits		Schools		Pupils	
		No.	Unit cost	No.	Unit cost	No.	Unit cost
School performance review	8,000	8	1,000.00	53	150.94	18,147	0.44
Performance monitoring test	7,340	8	915.50	53	138.49	5385	1.36
District support	4,000	8	500.00	53	75.47	18,147	0.22
School incentive grants	5,700	8	712.50	19	300.00	8226	0.69
Total	25,040	8	3,130.00	53	472.45	18,147	1.38

(Based on actual expenditures for Talensi-Nabdam District, 2007)

Comparing the costs of organising examination for pupils by LCD and the District Education Office, it appears the latter is cheaper. The DEO examination has a wider coverage than the LCD Performance Monitoring test since it covers children across all the primary classes. LCD organises examinations for P3 and P6 pupils, numbering a total of 5,385 whilst the DEOs examination coverage stands at 17,999. We have not adjusted these costing for inflation; note that the cost data is for 2007[14].

In view of general improvement in enrolment and quality of delivery of education, the input costs of the LCD programme have been efficient and effective. The LCD schools have done better than non-LCD schools in terms of attainment of teaching and learning outcomes in spite of the short gestation period of the LCD programme.

8.5   Sustainability and Ownership

The main challenge which LCD faces in the coming years will be the need for districts to take more ownership of the funding for the PMT and SPR process. Given the growing funding constraints of LCD, it is essential that districts are able to start paying more for the SPR process in order for it to be sustained. Field work in the Talensi-Nabdam district suggests that they are using other mechanisms to sustain common terminal testing within their district and are using the PTA meetings to provide feedback of the results to parents. Although this does not fully replace the SPR process it does help to sustain some elements teacher accountability and monitoring of parents. An interview with the DDE of one non LCD district confirmed that these two essential approaches have been used to hold teachers accountable in the Bawku West District and are improving performance results.

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[14]   1 USD was equivalent to 9,700 old Ghana Cedis which is now approx 0.97 in the new Ghana cedis.

The value of the SPR process therefore appears to be in the initial technical assistance provided by LCD tot districts and in some cases introduce them to performance monitoring as a key method to improving quality by empowering parents and community education structures (SMC and PTAs), to hold their teachers accountable. The technical support by LCD also ensures that DEO capacity is built to monitor teachers' performance at school level. In districts where performance monitoring has not been used as a key method for improving quality the SPR will be a significant added value strategy (i.e. new TENI districts in the Upper West and Northern Regions). There is also evidence from the LCD evaluative assessment to suggest that with the VSO management officers well informed of the process, a ripple effect within the districts in the region may be an outcome of introducing the SPR in any given district. More will be said about this ripple effect in the next section on lessons learned.

8.6   Programme Mainstreaming within GES Systems

For a long period, various strategies have being put in place by MOE/GES to improve quality of education delivery. Among the strategies was the PMT and SPAM which are no longer supported by MOE. The introduction of LCD programme is to revive the accountability system through the SPR process. TND and KND as well as some non-LCD districts appreciate the intrinsic value of LCD intervention. The two districts under review are making efforts to have aspects of the LCD programme integrated into the current system. The status of integration is more advanced in TND than in KND. In the former, common Term Exams encompassing all pupils in the district are conducted. Using PMT methods, a question Bank has been established where teachers are requested to submit questions. Schools are ranked according to performance. This is used for SPAM on which their SIP and SPIP are designed.

Bawku West which is non-LCD district also uses Centre for Education Performance and Assessment (CEPA) in Accra to conduct common exams for all pupils in P6 and JHS. The examination scores of pupils are analyzed by VSO Management Support Officers with the assistance of the District Planning Officer. The results and analysis of the examination are submitted to the PTA and SMT meetings for discussion. The minutes of these meetings inform the preparation of SIP and SPIP. As is done in the LCD districts, teacher training programme have been instituted with VSO Teachers Support Officer, DTST and circuit supervisors playing leading roles. Most of the training is focused on numeracy, literacy and problem solving as well as lesson notes preparation and delivery. Intensive training has also been instituted for teachers in the preparation of the TLMS. Consequently pupil and teachers have easy access to TLMS like their counterparts in the LCD schools.

In line with the LCD districts, Bawku West has established SMT to coordinate planning and implementation of programmes. Fuelling of motorbikes used by Circuit Supervisors and impromptu school visits by the Director has strengthened supervision. Unlike the LCD districts, Bawku West funds its programmes using the government budget and

DFID funds. As a result of the planned activities of the district, pupil performance has significantly improved. The district tops the Regional ranking for the BECE results. Using her working experience with QUIPs, QUEPS (CRS) and VSO as well as her working visit to observe the LCD programme in South Africa, the District Director has been able to mainstream their best practices in delivery of education. The success story of Bawku West has demonstrated that LCD programmes if mainstreamed in the education system can be sustained. Sustainability will require dedication and commitment as well informed leadership.

It has been the principle of LCD to use strong management and effective supervision to improve teaching and learning outcomes of pupils. This calls for the improved capacity of management to administer and supervise its schools. In TND, the SMT is not only established to meet regularly under the Director to discuss issues but also supervisory responsibilities have been shared among all senior officers to complement the efforts of the circuit supervisors. Formats are used for school inspection and visits. Reports are submitted and discussed at SMT meetings. At a result of the conduct of Common Terminal Examination for all pupils and school performance ranking, the TND and Bawku West districts have generated a keen competition among schools to excel in the exam being held annually. Adoption of schools by senior officers in the Directorate has not only complemented efforts of the circuit supervisors but also strengthened their supervisory roles.

The situation is different in KND which continues to rely on normal school monitoring visits by CSs. However, the two districts under review have demonstrated their desire to produce their SPR report without external assistance when the needed resources are provided. The planning units have all played a key role in producing SPR reports used for SPAM meetings. The collaborative efforts of LCD and GES staff coupled with the training of the DEO have: facilitated skills transfer, planning, monitoring and supervisory capacities to the Directorates; circuit supervisors and head teachers have considerably improved quality delivery resulting in a gradual integration of LCD principles of accountability and strategies to ensure school effectiveness and community ownership.

Chapter 10: Lessons Learned and Recommendations

10.1 Strategies which Grow from Reflection

The SPR approach of Link has grown out of an organic process of trial and error. The initial testing of the strategy used the comprehensive inspection which the districts were to conduct each year in a few schools. The data collection tools which were later developed by districts in collaboration with LCD to capture the information needs at the district and school level (later called the "EMIS annex") was an indigenous tool for school assessment. The PMT and even the qualitative tool for classroom observation have continued to be refined and developed by the District Education Offices through the Senior Management Teams and the LCD Ghana staff. This has resulted in a set of comprehensive and highly relevant tools for school quality and pupil assessment. Since these tools are so closely tied to existing materials there is an added value which LCD has brought to the district through the process of implementing the SPR.

10.2 *"Insider out approach"* and Leadership

Interviews with LCD staff and the field work conducted at the district level confirmed that the "insider out approach" demands a very strong leadership at the District Education Directorate level. The findings in Talensi-Nabdam suggest that the strong managerial skill of the District Education Director and continuity in his leadership has made a positive and significant contribution to LCD's impact. District Directors said that it takes at least five years to make a shift in the performance and quality of education in a district. The field work at school, circuit and district levels suggests that complex approaches to monitoring and increasing the performance of CSs from the top senior management to the circuit and downward also requires bottom up approaches which generate demand using a PMT and SPR process. Some of the elements of strong accountability measures from the top down include:

- A team building approach by the District Education Director which involves weekly meetings with all the professional and some non professional staff;
- Motivational team building through regular social and professional contact with the District Education Director to plan collectively;
- Clear lines of sanctioning for non performing teachers: warnings; rejection of endorsement on loan applications; demotion of head teachers and transfer of teachers to schools with stronger head teachers; and stoppage of salaries;
- Regular meetings among sections of the DEO office including regular meetings between the AD Supervisors and the Circuit Supervisors;
- Introduction and practice of using head teacher reports to focused on attendance of teachers (see formats in Talensi-Nabdam developed by the DEO);
- The proper and regular tooling of Circuit Supervisors which include monthly reporting based on their head teacher's reports concerning attendance;
- Regular reviews of the Circuit Supervisor visit reports;

- Strong leadership including evidence of how to motivate, reward and sanction non performing District Circuit Supervisors, Head teachers and teachers;
- |Strong supervision of the Circuit Supervisors e.g. having all professional staff adopt three schools for monitoring in the district; regular swapping of Circuit Supervisors so they do not become too familiar with the schools; and regular and random visits of the Deputy Director and DDE to a selection of schools;
- Empowerment of the SMT and ADs of Supervision to prioritise the funding available from the GOG to service their work including the regular support to CSs to fuel their motorbikes.

The above list is not exhaustive but serves to illustrate the type of creative and innovative leadership approaches needed by District Education Directors to empower their staff and to improve educational quality through increased accountability at district level. These approaches were used by Link focal DDE's and by some non-Link District Education Directors in the Upper East Region.

Interviews with LCD core staff indicated that the LCD strategies in any district demanded that the DDE was willing and able to stay in place for a period of at least four to five years in order to ensure that the capacity building inputs and vision of LCD was shared over time. It also demanded that the DDE be interested and open to a partnership which involved his or her guidance. The LCD approach enhanced DDE's who wanted to see a significant change in quality improvement in their district. The Link SPR strategies would most likely not yield the significant change approach if DDE's were not able or willing to take a strong leadership role in steering the programme interventions in their districts. This is something which must be considered when new programmes like TENI start working with the SPR approach. It will require some level of negotiation at national and regional level to ensure that there is continuity of leadership within District Education Offices.   This will ensure maximum impact and act as an incentive to interested and committed DDE's working in the target districts areas (TENI regional MOUs should include clauses related to continuity of directors).

10.3   Chain of Impact and Effect

Link remains responsive to the needs of the district and community levels through the flexibility it has in providing small but strategic grants where necessary. This flexibility and ability to supplement resources at the district office assists the DEO to quickly respond to the needs of its officers. For instance small grants are provided to Circuit Supervisors to fuel their motorbikes. This is particularly important when the districts do not receive enough funding from the Government to pay for essential expenditure of this nature. Communities are able to access School Grants to undertake repairs and improve the conditions for teaching and learning in the classroom.

Each element in the LCD approach, whether directly supported or indirectly supported through the LCD programme, remains essential to the process of change at the school and pupil performance level. Fundraising improves the interest and desire of parents to maximise their investment in the school thereby increasing the monitoring and demand

for accountability by the community. This ultimately results in higher degrees of ownership of the school. For instance in the Bagire School the PTA and SMC had decided to continue feeding the children after the CRS programme had been phased out. This was a Link school and the community had learned to raise funds, come together and develop plans to solve problems at the school level. When CRS stopped the school feeding programme the community started a school farm where they planted sorghum and were feeding their children daily with sorghum and corn cakes.

10.4   Ripple Effect of VSO/LCD Support to Districts

Field work in the Upper East Region revealed that the VSO volunteers through their interaction and peer support mechanisms have been a key agency for spreading concepts of the SPR approach to other districts. One of the Bolga VSO Management Support Officers was able to play a vital role in sharing their experiences of the SPR with other district management officers in the Upper East including the Bawku West District which spawned interest in starting a Senior Management Team (SMT), performance monitoring testing and SPAM processes at the district level. The VSO Management Support Officer developed a system of helping districts use the BECE results to rank their schools and then called in all the Head teachers to discuss the reasons for their schools ranking subject by subject. This type of consultative approach helped schools identify their strengths and weaknesses and set targets for working on key areas for improvement.

An interview with the DDE of the Bawku West District suggests that the VSO Teacher Support officers also played a significant role in improving the quality of education in her district. Teacher support officers who were focused on improving the teaching of English and Maths used several cluster and schools based INSET in a systematic approach to introducing improved teaching methods to these subject areas. This coupled with the performance monitoring and ranking of schools using the BECE helped to apply pressure to make use of the INSET training by teachers.

As the TENI programme rolls out, more systematic approaches are needed to build on the best practices which are available in the Upper East Region. There is also a need to transfer these systems of teacher support particularly in the area of TLMs and INSET to the new TENI districts. Manuals should be developed in order for VSO volunteers to build on this best practice with the target TENI districts to ensure quality and performance of the District Teacher Support Officers. The same should be done in terms of the SPR and the BECE ranking systems which were setup in the Bolga and Bawku West districts.

10.5   NGO Synergy and Impact

Findings from the Talensi-Nabdam District suggest that Link is making an impact particularly in areas where other NGOs and donor programmes are also active. Several communities visited in the district were already hosting a number of NGO programmes including:

- CRS School Feeding and QUIPS/QUEPS programmes
- WFP School Feeding programmes
- EQUALLS Community Support Teacher and Complementary Education Programmes
- World Vision Sponsorship Programme
- Censudi's community sensitization programme
- Action Aid programme

The District Education Performance reports mentioned the active NGO's in the district and this was quite visible in some Link partnered schools. The combination of interventions in some of the Link schools had enhanced the awareness creation among parents and PTA/SMC members as to the importance of education and had helped build their capacity in demanding for quality education. This synergy among the NGO programmes was not a planned or conceived idea but was happening because all the interventions were focused on one particular school community. LCD's programme was enhancing the ability of SMCS to manage the school grants and raise funds for their own activities. A ripple effect was being felt in non LCD schools with the DEO using better management principles of accountability and transparency. The same was said for the interventions where community sensitization by the LCD and other NGO programmes was spilling over and having a positive impact on the SMC and PTA in general enhancing the outcomes of the LCD programme interventions.

For instance, the district named the CRS QUEPS programme as another programme which was providing INSET training for its teachers in areas where LCD was also actively promoting lesson note planning, phonic and literacy instruction, and classroom management. More collaborative approaches are needed to ensure that INSET by NGOs at the district level is more systematic and synergised to reduce duplication and the waste of resources. As the LCD programme begins to scale up in other districts a more conscious effort should be made to identify and collaborate with existing NGO's to take advantage of working in the same schools.

The final lesson learned is that while Link is helping to strengthen the districts' accountability mechanisms through the chain of command from the District downward, other NGO programs are also able to better to attain some levels of outcome and impact since these accountability systems are working to improve the quality of education.

10.6   Making Impact in Districts with Weak Leadership

New strategies are needed to ensure that SPR and other LCD interventions are effective in districts with weak leadership. The team learned that holding District Education Offices accountable for the services that they provide may be very difficult in districts where there is weak leadership. Different approaches may be needed in these circumstances which would encompass:

- Building the capacity of the District Education Oversight Committees;
- Strengthening the involvement of the District Assembly, DA sub committee on Social Services and the District Education for All teams;
- Reporting the problems of leadership to the Regional Education Directorate or National Government for action;

- Empowering and revitalizing the SMC and PTA civic unions at the district and circuit level
- Involving the national media in a campaign to highlight the problems of education in a given district.

The problems of education must be dealt with... it is the right of every Ghanaian Child. NGO's should be more willing to expose "dysfunctional education leaders" to the correct authorities and press on these issues of performance until something is done. This evaluation revealed that not enough was done to address the leadership issue in one district and that the problems inequity and injustice within this education zone have now reached a higher scale within the communities.

10.7   The Need to Encourage More Usage and Systematic storage of Data from the SPR

The SPR process provides an excellent opportunity for district level actors to learn about the state of education in their schools. Information can be empowering if people understand its value. More work is needed by LCD to demonstrate to DEOs how the School Performance Reports can be used as a monitoring and evaluation tool over a long term basis. This would require simple workshops to assist the District Circuit Supervisors to develop circuit wide plans based on the data available to them.[15] These plans would include the targets laid out at the circuit spam meetings and the plans which individual schools have made using the SPR process, PMT and SIP.

The CSs, AD of Supervision and planners should also be encouraged to develop District School Improvement Plans which outline all the plans for the schools based on the SPAM and SIP development. These overall district School Improvement Plans would be short

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[15] The evaluation team did not find comprehensive circuit school development plans being developed across the two evaluation districts.   The LCD Director explained that since the funding has stopped for fuelling CS motor bikes very few CSs are following the procedure of developing circuit work plans based on the SIPs.

documents outlining the key areas of action which school communities have agreed to target over the last year and would facilitate better monitoring by both LCD staff and District officers as they visit the schools across the district. It would also provide a better overview of the key problems which schools are facing across the district and could be used as a resource document to the ADEOP and the DESP.

10.8   Lessons for the TENI Programme

Several approaches which LCD uses will be essential for the TENI programme to consider as it begins working with LCD in the three focal districts across northern Ghana. The commitment of the leadership to educational change processes and school improvement will be essential to the success of the SPR strategies and support by LCD. In scaling up to new districts a leadership audit/assessment will be an essential step in district selection in future TENI programmes.

With the existing districts which have been selected, a Memorandum of Agreement outlining key management, accountability and leadership principles which must be put in place to ensure the success of the project will be essential. This may include clauses which point to the need for:

- Monthly Circuit Supervisor reporting;
- Increased levels of supervision concerning the performance of CSs themselves;
- Increased staffing to supervise the schools across the district;
- Rewards and punishment for non performing Circuit Supervisors;
- Monthly Senior Management meetings;
- Weekly CS meetings with the AD of Supervision and other senior management; and
- Provision for the fuelling for motor bikes of all CSs who demonstrate ability to visit three schools per week

Another major lesson learned for TENI is the need to ensure that all the schools are covered under the SPR and PMT process in order to avoid problems in comparing data from year to year. Conducting the SPR in 50% of the schools in a district makes it very difficult to track progress of schools over time. Impact should be felt across all the schools and all the schools should be able to participate in all aspects of the SPR to ensure large scale impact. Selecting a portion of schools will make the TENI mentoring and evaluation work very difficult.

Finally a major lesson from the LCD work over the last few years is the need to work on building sustainable structures at the district level to respond to the needs and demands for better quality provision of education services. There were several aspects of LCD's work that could be sustained even after a change of district directorship given that these structures are in place:
- Regular senior management meetings

- The systems of accountability and performance for CSs to ensure that they provide quality supervision at the school level (e.g. their monthly reports, school visit reports should follow an acceptable guideline and template)
- Capacity building among CSs to know their roles and responsibilities towards the schools
- Regular training of Head teachers and SMC chairpersons to ensure that the school is make efforts to improve the quality of education.

One of the most important findings from the evaluation suggests the need to ensure that community ownership of schooling is supported through both the usage of performance appraisals of children and fundraising activities. Several LCD and non LCD schools demonstrated a degree of commitment, interest and ownership of their schools because they had made a substantive investment in the school, the teachers or their children. Fundraising activities should be an integral part of the TENI programme which builds the spirit of community ownership and empowerment and result in more monitoring by partners and key community representatives (SMC and PTA).

10.9   Final Recommendations

Strengthen Governance Systems above the District Education Directorate

There were several approaches which should be considered where there is weak leadership at District Education level in order to strengthen overall governance and accountability systems of the DEO office itself:
- LCD should advocate for stronger leaders at the district level;
- Work on strengthening the District DEFAT teams would help to hold the DEO accountable;
- Strengthen the DEOCs
- Get Regional Directors involved on a regular basis
- Hold a regional forum to analyse performance on a district basis
- Set up an SPR tasks force within the DEO.

District level recommendations related to the SPR Process

LCD should attempt to ensure that circuit and district SPAM reports are generated along with District School improvement plans which reflect the specific activities which the schools are intending to carry out over the year.

The ADEOP should also attempt to better integrate and reflect the findings of the EDUCOM if more district level reporting is available.

Much more work is needed to assist districts learn to keep records, and document their experience in order to ensure that each stage of the SPR process is recorded for purposes of internal and external monitoring evaluation systems.

A master listing of all the in-service training programs recording the participants at the district level should be kept by LCD and DEOs to track the Head teachers and teachers receiving training over the cycle of intervention at District level.

LCD could also enhance its training by using the SMC/PTA manuals developed by the QUIPS project under the Community School Alliance program and the most recent training materials developed by GAITT 2.

Strengthening the Capacity of LCD to Scale Up

The LCD self assessment instrument for Organizational Development revealed that some systems are needed to ensure that LCD is able to continue to grow and sustain their efforts in relation to improving quality at district level:

- Urgent need to put in place information management systems for LCD in order to preserve data at the school, district and national level which can be used over time and as a fall back to district storage systems.

- LCD and DEO also need to enhance their abilities to ensure proper storage, back up and retrieval systems in soft and hard copy.
- More infrastructure support is needed for MIS systems and data analysis systems for SPR at the LCD office and District office levels; as the project scales up the attention to computer infrastructural needs is required.
- There is the need to put in place better financial systems and hire a part time accountant in the UE LCD office and full time accountant in southern Ghana.
- The yearly operational plan of LCD should include more fundraising strategies with a focus on core financing; at least one part time fundraising person for Ghana may be needed.
- Operational manuals related to SPR and capacity building processes should be refined and developed to help districts implement and take ownership of the processes.
- A more comprehensive system for lesson learning, monitoring and evaluation should be established by LCD in order to increase their own support to the districts. This could begin by using the District School improvement plans as the starting place for M and E systems.
- A program log framework and results based management framework needs to be developed with the staff in order to improve overall LCD monitoring and evaluation systems;
- MOUs with districts should be pursued in districts which have not negotiated in order to ensure sustainability and cost sharing arrangements are outlined.
- Procedures and guidelines for District Education Offices should be developed.

LCD has been in a learning mode for the last three years since the SPR was piloted in the Upper East region. They have been capturing some of the lessons learned through staff meetings and annual consultations/reports but more team reflection is needed to ensure a collective vision and staff is involved in developing strategic fundraising plans.

As other programs like TENI begin to scale up the SPR process, LCD will have to carry out a management audit of its current staff and their roles and responsibilities. Currently where the SPR process needs to be scaled up in new districts and more staff will have to be trained on how to manage, implement and sustain this process.

Scaling up will also require stronger systems for cost sharing between LCD and Districts are put in place to ensure ownership.

More staff are needed in the delivery of the SPR process ensuring quality across larger numbers of districts particularly given the diverse capacities of district planning and statistics officers.

LCD should have facilitators/officers in the districts in order to build their capacity to monitor the performance and quality of activities (these could be VSO volunteers or NSP with skills to support the training of personnel).

More training for LCD staff to upgrade their knowledge in information management systems is required;

Implementation of SPR and selection of new districts

- LCD must do a feasibility assessment on leadership quality and abilities at through in-depth interviewing at the district and regional levels.

- Coalition building with other NGO's wanting to invest in the district would also help to ensure that regional directors identify the "ready" districts for LCD intervention.

- LCD should develop a systems audit on level of accountability and quality delivery at the district level as part of the scoping exercise for new districts and part of the baseline for its work.

- A more phased approach should be used in weaker led districts whereby more training and capacity building for District Assemblies governance structures should be focussed on educational management and leadership. Training for the DEOC and other DA subcommittees on social services and education should be explored.

- Training at the DEO should also be focussed on moral leadership, core values, setting accountability / performance systems for senior officers including all front ADs and CSs and new strategies should be devised to support the SPR process from the bottom up including the strengthening of the SMC coalitions at the circuit level.

- These weaker districts should be technically better equipped in management principles of financial project planning.

Synergy and Coalition building with other NGOs and District Assemblies

Collaboration should be attempted with other NGO's such Action Aid and CENSUDI to work at the community level in supporting sensitization and community empowerment through the formation of SMC unions/PTA unions at circuit and district levels.

More collaboration should be sought with the District Assemblies in order to stimulate and sustain PMT and SPR processes when LCD phases out of a district; this should include the strengthening and creation of the DEOC.

District readiness for the "Insider Outsider"

The "insider out" approaches in district with weak leadership should be increment in usage where LCD gradually scales up its investment and mainstreaming approaches in

order to use incentives for change at the district level (e.g. fuelling of motor bikes… empowered through training, SPR aspects etc)…

Stronger community structures and involvement

- More training is needed along with coalition building to strengthen community support for education at the circuit level. LCD should collaborate with other civil society organisations to build circuit level SMC coalitions in order to provide a stronger voice for change within the District.

- Where possible circuit and SMC unions should be formed in order to strengthen the SPAM process and bottom up approach of LCD's works at the community school level. This would also strengthen SMC's in their ability to hold teachers accountable.

Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation Systems in LCD

- A more results based approach to monitoring would demand that LCD consider putting together an M and E framework based on its goals and objectives and end results.

- PMTs should be run on a regular basis (once a year) in all the schools involved in the SPR process.

- SPR data should be used by a broader range of stakeholders working on educational change processes at the district level. More work is needed to ensure the DEO maximise the SPR data particularly the teaching learning data in their everyday monitoring work.

- LCD should also think of different SPR information packages that can be used by districts having different degrees of information need and performance reporting; LCD should not assume all districts need all the full SPR data set particularly where the district have already a common terminal test and social report card process of the schools.

- LCD should think of how it can integrate its systems with the MOE's new performance tracking systems which will introduce school and district report cards in the coming year (2009/10).

Annex 1: Evaluative events and interviewees at national, regional and district levels

Table A1: Regional and National Level Interviews

Date	Research Event	Person
April 18th	Interview with District Director of Bawku West	Mrs Agnes Atagabe
April 22rd	Interview with the Regional Director of Upper East	
	NNED Lead NGO in the Upper East Censudi	Margaret Mary Issaka
May 2009	Interview with the District Education Director of Bongo	Mr. Francis
May 2009	Interview with Leslie Tettey, Ghana National Education Coalition Campaign (GNECC)	Leslie Tettey (National Coordinator) Kwame (Programme officer)
May 2009	Interview with Head of EMIS Office, Ministry of Education	Mr Coleman
May, 2009	Interview with Head of Planning Budgeting, Monitoring and Evaluation (PBME), Ministry of Education	Mr Charles Tsegah

Table A2: Link Staff Interaction and interviews

Date	Research Event	Person
April 8th and 9th	Presentations and interaction with the Director of LCD Ghana Development of the evaluative framework Review of LCD's vision, goals and objectives Discussion on key indicators for the evaluation Sharing a collective vision	Dr Quaigran
April 12th	Interaction with the LCD SPR programme officer, Upper East Setting up of the evaluation	
April 13th	Full team interaction with LCD Presentation of LCD on all their	

	programme strategies (SPR, Capacity building and others) Questions and answers	
April 20th	Focal group meeting with key officers related to data management and retrieval of key documents	
April 21st	In-depth meeting to review the documentation with the SPR officer	
April 24th	Interview with the Key officers in the Upper East Key self evaluation questions In-depth interview with the Programme manager of the Upper East (Ezekiel) Office review of documentation	Mr. Bashirudeen Mr Ezekiel
May 15th, 2009	Final meeting and interview with Mr. Kennedy Quaigran	Dr Quaigran

Table A3: Interviews held with the Talensi-Nabdam District Education Office

Date	Events	People interviewed
April 15th	In-depth Interview with the District Director of Education	Mr. Francis Ayaaba
April 16th	Focal Group Discussion with the District Education Circuit Supervisors	Deputy Director (AD supervision) 5 Circuit Supervisors at the meeting
April 17th	Focal Group Discussion with the Senior Management Team	Deputy Director (DDE) AD Human Resources Girl child officer SHEP officer
April 18th	Interview with District Statistics Officer	Mr. Saani
April 21st	Interview with the Planning and statistics officer Interviews with the Budget officers Interview with the AD supervision District Audit exercise	

Table A4: Key evaluative events in the School and Community in Talensi-Nabdam

Date	Events	Person
Bagire community primary (LCD programme school)		
April 15th	Visit and observation at the school Focal Group Discussion with seven P6 girls attending the school Meeting with the Head teacher and 6 primary and 2 JSS teachers Meeting with the SMC and PTA (executive) and other members Review of key financial and management books at the school	Over 18 people attended the meeting (over half were women)
Saazo Primary School		
April 16th	Observations at the school	
April 16th	Head teacher in-depth interview	
	Focal Group discussion with primary teachers	
	Focal Group Discussion with P6 Girls	
	Focal Group Discussion with P6 Boys	
	Focal Group Discussion with the SMC and PTA members and executive	
Tarebora Primary School (LCD programme School)		
April 16th	Observations at the school and review of key financial and program management books	
April 16th	Head teacher in-depth interview	
	Focal Group discussion with primary teachers	
	Focal Group Discussion with P6 Girls	
	Focal Group Discussion with P6 Boys	
	Focal Group Discussion with the SMC and PTA members and executive	
Tinga Primary School		
April 17th	Observations at the school and review of key financial and school management books	
April 17th	Head teacher in-depth interview	
April 17th	Focal Group discussion with primary teachers	
	Focal Group Discussion with P6 Girls	
	Focal Group Discussion with P6 Boys	
	Focal Group Discussion with the SMC and PTA members and executive	

Table A5: Key evaluative events with the Head Teachers and teachers in the Talensi-Nabdam District

	Event	Schools represented
April 17th	Full consultation with Heads and teachers from 4 Link and 3 non-Link programme schools	Yamerigu primary Sakorit Primary Awaradone primary Duusi primary Tongo Primary Tinga primary St Theresa's RC primary
April 17th	Small group discussions with 6 schools (4 Link schools and 2 non-Link schools)	7 HT and 8 primary teachers represented from the above schools.

Table A6: Key evaluative events at the Kassena-Nankana District Education Office

Date	Events	People interviewed
April 22nd	In-depth Interview with the Deputy Director of Education	
April 20th	Focal Group Discussion with the District Education Circuit Supervisors	8 Circuit Supervisors at the meeting
April 21st	Focal Group Discussion with the Senior Management Team	AD Supervision AD Human Resources Girl child officer SHEP officer
April 22nd	Interview with District Statistics and Budget Officer	
April 22nd	Interview with the AD supervision	
April 22nd	Review of all the District Link information stored at the District Education Office	

Table A7: Key evaluative events in the School and Community in Kassena-Nankana

Date	Events	Person
Alagba community primary (LCD programme school)---Link		
April 21st	Visit and observation at the school (school information audit)	
April 21st	Focal Group Discussion with 7 P6 girls attending the school	
April 21st	Focal group discussion with P6 boys	
April 21st	Meeting with the Head teacher and 6 primary and 2 JSS teachers	
April 21st	Meeting with the SMC and PTA (executive) and other members	Over 18 people attended the meeting (over half were women)
April 21st	Review of key financial and management books at the school	
Ayaga Primary School---Link		
April 22nd	Observations at the school	
	Discussion with the Head teacher	
	Focal Group Discussion with P6 Girls	
	Focal Group Discussion with P6 Boys	
	Focal Group Discussion with the SMC and PTA members and executive director	
	Review of key financial and school management documents	
Sembu Primary School (non Link)		
April 22nd	Observations at the school and review of key financial and programme management books	
	Head teacher in-depth interview	
	Focal Group discussion with primary teachers	
	Focal Group Discussion with P6 Girls	
	Focal Group Discussion with P6 Boys	
	Focal Group Discussion with the SMC and PTA members and executive director	
Anaanore Primary School (non-Link)		
	Observations at the school and review of key financial and school management books	
	Head teacher in-depth interview	
	Focal Group discussion with primary teachers	
	Focal Group Discussion with P6 Girls	
	Focal Group Discussion with P6 Boys	

	Focal Group Discussion with the SMC and PTA members and executive director	
Atoa Primary (Link)		
	Observations at the school and review of key financial and school management books	
	Head teacher in-depth interview	
	Focal Group discussion with primary teachers	
	Focal Group Discussion with P6 Girls	
	Focal Group Discussion with P6 Boys	
	Focal Group Discussion with the SMC and PTA members and executive director	

Team Evaluative Reflection Meetings

- Saturday April 18th, 2009

- Friday   April 24th, 2009

- Saturday April 25th, 2009

Annex 2: Enrolment data from Talensi-Nabdam and Kassena-Nankana

Table A8: Enrolment data for Talensi-Nabdam district

	Number of schools	Enrolment		
		Boys	Girls	Total
Pre- School	45	1520	1543	3063
Primary	101	16,563	15,571	32,134
Junior High School	46	4,332	4,193	8,525
SHS	7	1826	789	2,615

(SPR 2007)

Table A9: Number of schools and enrolment figures for Kassena-Nankana as of June, 2007

	Number of Schools	Enrolment		
		Boys	Girls	Total
Pre-School	57	2870	2805	5675
Primary	59	7289	6556	13845
JHS	31	2316	2203	4519
SHS	2	1069	413	1482

(June, 2007 SPR report)

Annex 3: Information Audit at School Level

Table A10: Information Audit at School Level

School	Petty cash book	Cash analysis book	Bank records	School Audit reports	General level of financial records.[16]
Bagire (Link)	√	√	√	-	Good
Tarebora (Link)	√	√	√	-	Very good
Ayaga** (Link)	×	√	√	-	Fair
Alabga** (Link)	√	√	×	×	Very good
Atoa** (Link)	√	√	√	-	Good
Tinga (non Link)	√	√	√		Very good
Saazo* (non Link)	_	_	_	_	_
Anaanore # (non Link)	_	_	_	_	_
**Sembu (non link)	×	√	×	×	Poor

* The team did not meet the head teacher so there was no audit at the school
# There was no access to financial related data because the head teacher who has the keys to office was not available.
** Head teacher was new to the school

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[16] Ranking
1. Very good 2. Good 3. Fair 4. Poor

Annex 4: NGOs and Donor Agencies support to schools in Kassena-Nankana District

Table A11: NGOs and Donor Agencies support to schools in Kassena-Nankana District

Schools	Rural /Urban	Support	Activities
Anaanore Primary	Rural	CRS	Food for pupils but phased out
Amenga-etgo Primary	Rural	Link	School grant, fund raising, TLMs, etc
Gumongo	Urban	Link and CRS	Link-School grant, fund raising, TLMs, special grant and school partnership CRS- provide food for pupils but phased out
St Paul Primary	Urban	Link and WFP	Link- grants and exchange programme – exchange of letters WFP- food rations for girls
Ayaga school	Rural	Link, RAINS and CRS	Link- grants and others support such as text books, washing basins, TLMS and teacher quarters CRS- feeding for school pupils but pulled out in September 2008 RAINS- Uniforms, football and two bicycles
Alagba	Rural	Link and WFP	Link- Provide grants, TLMs, fund raising, etc for schools WFP- Food ration but rolled out
Namolo	Urban	CRS, JICA	CRS- feed pupils but phased out JICA- In-service training (Cluster Based In-services and School Based In-services training)
Kologo-Tuo	Rural	SDA, CRS	SDA- Built class room block CRS- feed pupil but phased out
Sembu	Rural	EU, DIFD and ENAM	EU-3 Unit classroom block DFID-3 Unit classroom block ENAM-shed for KG

(Based on Head teacher workshop)

Annex 5: NGO intervention in schools in Tanlesi-Nabdam District

Table 12: NGO intervention in schools in Tanlesi-Nabdam District

School /Community	LCD or Non LCD	NGO	Intervention
Tinga	Non Link	CRS	Feeding pupils
Tongo	Non Link	CRS and Word Vision	Feeding pupils Care for Nursery pupil
Sakordit	Link	Link	Grant, TLM, Exchange programme, etc
		CRS	Feeding pupils
		CRS (QUIPS)	TLM
		Star of Hope	Feeding pupils
		WFP	Food rations for girls
Yameriga	Link	CRS	Feeding pupils
		Link	Grant, TLM, Exchange programme, etc Feeding pupils
		Afrikids	Support for orphans and needy pupils
		World Vision	Provide stationary and enhance enrolment
Awaradone	Link	Link	Feeding pupils Grant, TLM, Exchange programme, etc
		Action Aid	Furniture for pupils
		CRS	Feeding pupils
		World Vision	Play materials and classroom block
		Star of Hope	Teachers, play materials, TLMs, INSET for head teacher and teachers
Duusi	Link	CRS	Feeding pupils

		Link	Grant, TLM, Exchange programme, etc Feeding pupils
		Action Aid	Furniture for pupils
		Star of hope	Teachers, play materials, TLMs, INSET for head teacher and teachers play materials and classroom block
		World Vision	School infrastructure
		EQUALL	Quality teacher and learning
		Afrikids	Support for needy children
		UDEF	Support in agriculture

Annex 6: Talensi-Nabdam District Head teacher and teacher workshop responses

Table A13: Impact and outcomes – Link Schools

Indicator	Outcomes	Impact
Quality of Education	"Improvement in infrastructure; renovation of ripped off roof by Link, Urinal, electrification of school, library by Link and District Directorate of education" (Yameriga primary head teacher) "The provision of TLMs by Link and the correspondence with partner school help pupil to concentrate and also expose pupils to other things" (Sakote primary head teacher)	"With the provision of in-services training, skills of teachers have improved and TLMs are now available for effective teaching and learning"(Awaradone Primary Head teacher)
School Management		"There has been reduction in the misuse of school funds by head teachers and staff" (Awaradone, primary) "The training organised by Link help the head teacher to manage their school thereby increasing the school and community relationship. It also increase the cordial relationship between head teachers and staff" (Sakote Primary head teacher)
Capacity Building	"Workshops have been organised for SMC chairman, treasurers and head teachers" (Awaradone, primary) "The fuelling of motor bikes, awarding hard working teachers, giving bicycles to distant teacher and training of teachers on preparation of SPIP, petty cash, cash books, etc help	"Teachers are able to keep proper records for the school. the community is also able to organise and raise funds to support the school" (Awaradone, primary head teacher)

	build the capacity of teachers" (Sakote primary Head teacher)	
Community Support/Relation to the school	"The community with support from World Vision have provided two classroom blocks and a store room, a toilet, and urinal pit" (Awaradone, primary)	"Children now have good classroom accommodation for learning. There is an office and a store for teachers and pupils to store TLMs. This has helped to reduce outcomes of school materials getting missing or destroy by pupil. With the aid of toilet and urinal pit, children do not urinate and defecate on the school compound. This has helped to bring about a situation where children now have a clean and healthy environment" (Awaradone Primary head teacher)
Access and retention	"For the Past two years, enrolment have increased from 409 pupils in 2006/07 to 416 in 2007/08 and then to 419 in 2008/09" (Awaradone, primary head teacher)	"With the increase in enrolment, there is a reduction in the illiteracy rate in the community"

Table A14: Impact and Outcomes - Non-Link school

Indicator	Outcome	Impact
Quality of Education		"There is improvement in teaching and learning as a result of more textbooks and other materials that has been provided by the district. This makes the teacher access information easily and to update his/her knowledge. The continuous supervision of the CS's improve teaching and learning" (Tongo primary head teacher)
School Management		"Management of school has been going on smoothly and records are well kept in the school. Over-expenditure of school funds has been reduced" (Tongo primary head teacher)
Capacity Building		"As a result of the effort by Head teacher records of the school have been kept properly. Also, school management has improved. This has been made possible as a result of the

		training received by the head teacher on record keeping and school management (Tong primary head teacher)
Community Support/Relation to school	"There is a cordial relationship between the community and the school, and the community now responds to calls and also renders services for the school whenever necessary. For instance, the contribution of monies to cater for volunteer teachers, examination fees, etc" (Tongo primary head teacher)	"As a result of a cordial relationship between the school and the community, the community do lace up with the school find about the performance of their wards. They also contribute money to help cater for the volunteer teachers in the school. This makes the volunteer teachers active and ready to perform in school" (Tongo primary head teacher)
Performance		"In the past two years most pupils have been able to improve upon their reading skills as a result of in-service training that was organised for teachers on how to take pupils through reading an calculation" (Tongo Primary head teacher)
Access and Retention		"Due to the increase in enrolment in the school the illiteracy rate of children in the community has been reduced and about 90% of children in community are in school" (Tongo primary head teacher)

Kassena-Nankana District

Table A15: Impact and outcomes –Link schools

Indicator	Outcome	Impact
Quality of Education	"In-services training on lesson notes and TLM preparation has improved lesson delivery" (St Paul's Primary school head teacher) "Pupil's attendance has improved and teaching and learning have become effective" (Atoa primary head teacher). "Provision of TLM by Link is pivotal in good lesson delivery" (Namolo	"There is improvement in the ability of pupil to read and write" (Atoa primary head teacher).

	Primary) "Workshops and in-service training has improved teaching and learning in the classroom" (St Paul's Primary) "Link provides training on teaching phonic; provide TLMs, exercise books and furniture to the school" (Atoa primary head teacher). "In-service training by Link and JICA which has improved teaching and learning" (St Paul's Primary school Head teacher)	
School Management	"Training workshops for SMC/PTAs and Head teachers have equipped them with management and record-keeping skills" (St Paul's Primary school) "Frequent visit by CSs to the school to give professional support especially to non-professional teachers improve the delivery of lesson and check (teacher) absenteeism" (Ayaga primary head teacher)	"There is proper records keeping now and head teachers are more accountable" (Namolo primary head teacher)
Capacity Building	"SMC, PTA and head teachers are trained on the roles and responsibilities in school management" (St Paul's Primary school head teacher)	"SMC/PTA and parents now know that schools are community based" (St Paul's Primary head teacher) "In service training have removed fears of teacher in teaching certain challenges topic, thereby enhancing quality teaching and learning" (Ayaga Primary head teacher)
Community Support/Relation to school	"Link programme have revived SMC /PTA meeting in the school" (St Paul's Primary school head teacher) "The PTA raise funds to support volunteer teachers and provide communal labour in building school infrastructure. The SMC visit the school	"SMC/PTA are now more effective; they visit and monitor the school more frequent" (St Paul's Primary head teacher) "Increase participation of SMC/PTA in school management" (St Paul's Primary

	regularly to check and solve school problems" Atoa Primary head teacher)	head teacher)
Performance	"Teachers are equipped with new methods of teaching, and performance of children has improved" (Namolo primary head teacher)	
Access and retention	"There is increase in enrolment because of various supports by NGOs (WFP and CRS) and sensitisation about the importance of educating children especially the girl child" (St Paul's Primary school head teacher)	Increased literacy in the community (Namolo Primary head teacher)

Annex 7:   Unit costs of terminal exam (2008) in Talensi-Nabdam

Table A16: Unit costs of terminal exam (2008) in Talensi-Nabdam

Activity	District expenditure (gh¢)	Circuit		Schools		Pupils	
		No.	Unit cost	No.	Unit cost	No.	Unit cost
Terminal examination (lower primary)	5,233.00	8	654.13	53	98.74	10,466	0.50
Terminal examination (upper primary)	4,894.45	8	611.81	53	92.35	7,533	0.65
Total	10,127.45	8	1,265.93	53	191.08	17,999	0.56

Data source: District Education office (Talensi)

Annex 8:   BECE results across Selected Districts in the Upper East

Table A17: BECE results across Selected Districts in the Upper East

District	2005	2006	2007	2008	Average	Annual Growth Rate
	% Pupils Ave 6-30	% Pupils Ave 6-30	% Pupils Ave 6-30	% Pupils Avg 6-30		
Talensi	44.5	46.1	59	53.7	50.8	6.5
Kassena	53	52.3	49	46.9	50.3	-4.0
Bolga	65	63.2	49	46.9	56	-10.3
Bawku West	42	57.1	44	65.3	52.1	15.8
Bongo	63	46.4	39	34.8	45.8	-17.9
Region	42.0	52.9	49.1	44	46.5	1.6

Annex 9: District Education Office (Data Available & Usage)

Table A18: District Education Office (Data Available & Usage)

SR No.	Accessibility & Usage/ Data Type	District	Knowledge of Data Existence	Data Availability	Years of Coverage	Data Management	Data Coverage Concept	Data Usage Level
1.	EMIS Data	KASSENA	K	A	2007 & 2008	P	C	1
		TALENSI	K	NA	NA	P	C	1
2.	Teacher Observation	KASSENA	K	A	2007 & 2008	G	C	1
		TALENSI	K	NA	NA	P	C	1
3.	PMT Data	KASSENA	K	A	2007 & 2008	P	C	1
		TALENSI	K	SCH Level	2006 & 2007	P	C	1
4.	School PMT Results Ranking	KASSENA	K	A	2007 & 2008	P*	C	1
		TALENSI	K	A	2006 & 2007	V.G	C	1
5.	Circuit/District PMT Result Ranking	KASSENA	K	A	2007 & 2008	G	C	1
		TALENSI	K	A	2006 & 2007	V.G	C	1
6.	SPR Reports	KASSENA	K	A	2007 & 2008	G	C	1
		TALENSI	K	A	2006 & 2007	V.G	C	1

SR No.	Accessibility & Usage/ Data Type	District	Knowledge of Data Existence	Data Availability	Years of Coverage	Data Management	Data Coverage Concept	Data Usage Level
7.	Sch./Community SPAM Report	KASSENA	K	A	2007 & 2008	P	C	1
		TALENSI	K	SCH	2006 & 2007	-	C	1
8.	Circuit SPAM Report	KASSENA	K	NA	2007 & 2008	P	C	1
		TALENSI	K	CIRCUIT	-	P	C	1
9.	EDUCON Report	KASSENA	K	A	2007	G	C	1
		TALENSE	K	A	2006	V.G	C	1
10.	LCD SIP	KASSENA	K	A	2007 & 2008	P	C	1
		TALENSI	K	A	2006 & 2007	V.G	C	1
11.	LCD SPIP	KASSENA	K	SCH Level	2007 & 2008	P	C	1
		TALENSI	K	SCH Level	-	P	C	1
12.	Funds for LCD SPIP	KASSENA	K	SCH Level	2001-08	P	C	1
		TALENSI	K	SCH Level	-	-	C	1
13.	Circuit Work Plan	KASSENA	K	CIRCUIT	2007 & 2008	P	C	1

SR No.	Accessibility & Usage/ Data Type	District	Knowledge of Data Existence	Data Availability	Years of Coverage	Data Management	Data Coverage Concept	Data Usage Level
		TALENSI	K	CIRCUIT	2006-09	P	C	1
14.	DIP	KASSENA	K	NA	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
		TALENSI	K	NA	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
15.	ADEOP	KASSENA	K	A	2001-2010	G	C	1
		TALENSI	K	A	2001-2009	G	C	1
16.	DESP	KASSENA	K	A	2001-2010	G	C	1
		TALENSI	K	A	2001-2009	G	C	1
17.	LCD Sch. Grants	KASSENA	K	SCH Level	2001-2010	P	C	1
		TALENSI	K	SCH Level	-	P	-	1
18	Circuit Supv. Grant	KASSENA	K	A	2006-2008	G	C	1
		TALENSI	K	A	2006-2008	P	C	1
19.	GES SPIP	KASSENA	K	A	2005,2009, 2008	G	C	1
		TALENSI	K	SCH Level	2005-2009	P	C	1

SR No.	Accessibility & Usage/ Data Type	District	Knowledge of Data Existence	Data Availability	Years of Coverage	Data Management	Data Coverage Concept	Data Usage Level

KEY
K-   Knowledge
NK-   No Knowledge
NA-   Not Available
C-   Comprehensive
I-   Very Used
V.G-   Very Good
G-   Good
P-   Poor

Annex 10: Performance Monitoring Test Results: Inter-district Comparison (Sample of LCD and Non LCD Schools)

Table A19: Performance Monitoring Test Results: Inter-district Comparison

SR NO.	DISTRICT	SCHOOLS TYPE	ENGLISH SCORE		MATHS SCORE		SCHOOL AVERAGE
			P3	P6	P3	P6	
2006	TALENSI	LCD	10.53	40.13	43.59	34.26	32.13
		NON-LCD	9.99	29.04	45.17	29.70	28.63
	BOLGA	LCD	11.15	49.77	37.17	37.17	34.33
		NON LCD	12.73	48.97	38.22	41.29	35.96

Annex 11: Performance Monitoring Test Scores for a Sample of LCD and Non LDC schools in Talensi and Bolga (2006)

Table A20: Performance Monitoring Test Scores for a Sample of LCD and Non LDC schools in Talensi and Bolga (2006)

SR NO.	DISTRICT	SCHOOLS TYPE	ENGLISH SCORE		MATHS SCORE		SCHOOL AVERAGE	
			P3	P6	P3	P6		
2006	TALENSI	LCD	10.53	40.13	43.59	34.26	32.2	
	BOLGA	NON-LCD	11.15	49.77	37.17	37.17	34.3	
	DISTRICT AVERAGE	LCD	10.84	44.95	40.38	35.71	33.2	
	TALENSI	NON LCD	9.99	29.04	45.17	29.70	28.6	
	BOLGA	NON LCD	12.73	48.97	38.22	41.29	36	
	DISTRICT AVERAGE	NON LCD	11.36	39.01	41.7	35.5	32.3	