

**GHANA SCHOOL FEEDING
PROGRAM**

**CASE STUDY OF THE BAWKU
WEST DISTRICT**

**UPPER EAST REGION
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INTRODUCTION

The Ghana School Feeding Program is currently implemented in two (2) schools out of forty seven (47) schools in the Bawku West District. In 2005 the first school, Tanga Kpalsako primary received school feeding. In 2006 a second school, Binaba primary, followed.

This case study is a respond to the inventory that was conducted by SNV (December 2007), one of the strategic partners of the GSFP. The inventory rightly stated that information on the school level is hard to get due to the decentralised nature of the program; this case study takes a closer look at how the GSFP is executed in both schools and therefore, sadly, in the whole of Bawku West.

The case study points out challenges that both schools are facing, but also strategies that have been put in place to overcome some of these challenges and the level of involvement of different parties on the community and district level.

Background information

The Bawku West District is one of the 9 districts in the Upper East Region of Ghana. It was carved out of the old Bawku East District under the new local government system in 1988. The district capital of Bawku West is Zebilla. The district shares boundaries with Burkina Faso in the North and covers a land area of approximately 979 square kilometres (which is about 12% of the total area of the region). The district has a population of 80,606 people with 39,542 being male and 43,510 female of whom only 12% are literate. The Bawku West district is predominantly rural with an estimated 90% of the people engaged in farming, trading and handicraft works. Households in the district have an average of 6 children per woman, higher compared to the national figures of 4 to 5 children per woman.

The climate...

The Bawku West district lies in the Savannah zone of the country. The harsh Savannah climate allows only one harvest a year were people harvest twice in the west and south of Ghana. The dry season stretches from November to June, with average temperatures of 45 degrees from February to May. The people of Bawku West are highly dependant of their environment; one lost harvest, due to e.g. draught or flooding in the rainy season, causes food shortages on the household level that are not easy to compensate on a yearly basis. This has a tremendous effect on the educational situation; where people are unable to provide in their own basic needs, education becomes a luxury. The general attitude towards education is one of ignorance, meanwhile the child is denied the right of education and a future where it has a more sustainable chance to grow out of poverty.

Quality and quantity of education...

The district has 57 kindergartens, 47 primary schools, 17 Junior High Schools and 2 senior high schools. Enrolment figures of 2006 show a total enrolment of 12.136 children in primary schools. Unfortunately only 2234 continue to enrol in Junior High Schools. The main reason for this high dropout is the distance that most pupils have to travel to a JHS and the unavailability of sufficient transport. Most parents cannot afford bicycles for their wards. The number of pupils going to senior secondary school is even more worrying: in 2006 only 465 (of whom 201 were girls) pupils enrolled*.

One of the most important indicators for quality of education is the number of pupils per teacher. The Ghana Education Service norm for the number of pupils per teacher is 35:1. In Bawku West, The pupil trained teacher ratio for the Kindergarten in 2006 was 217:1. The pupil trained teacher ratio on primary schools was 75:1. In rural areas (like the Bawku West district) it is hard to attract teachers to the schools. Most teachers are young and the rural community does not offer any type of leisure activities. Availability of teachers' quarters would surely entice teachers to accept and stay committed to a post in a rural area.

- Figures obtained from the District Education Office of Bawku West

How the case study was conducted

Several stakeholders on the community level provided information. Furthermore views of the Desk Officer, heading the District Implementation Committee are added to the report. The case study compares both schools on the same grounds e.g. enrolment figures, availability of cooking equipment/ good infrastructures, involvement of various stakeholders, challenges and coping strategies.

This case study tries to be as objective as possible; all stakeholders were interviewed separately and inconsistencies were re-discussed. My personal observations are gathered under '*personal remarks*'.

Tanga Kpalsako primary and Binaba primary

Tanga Kpalsako primary lies in a relatively small village, approximately seven (7) KM away from the district capital, Zebilla. Tanga Kpalsako is connected to Zebilla with dirt roads. Binaba is the second largest town of the Bawku West district, connected to Zebilla with means of public transport and a road partly consisting of tarmac. Distance between Zebilla and Binaba is thirty-five (35) KM. However both Binanaba and Tanga Kpalsako have their own market (out of the in total 11 markets in the district, with the market of Zebilla being the biggest).

Both schools have a Kinder Garden department (KG1 and KG2) and a Junior High Department. In Tanga Kpalsako the Junior High department falls under the management of separate structures and head teacher. In Binaba all departments fall under the same management structures and head teacher.

Outcome of the case study

	TANGA PALSAKO PRIMARY	BINABA PRIMARY
Information Obtained from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Head teacher ○ Secretary of SIC ○ Opinion leader of Tanga area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Head teacher ○ Assembly woman of Binaba electoral area

Infrastructure and equipment...

	TANGA PALSAKO PRIMARY		BINABA PRIMARY	
	Available	Comments	Available	Comments
Kitchen	Yes	Recently established, cement block, in good state.	Yes	In poor condition, mud construction, with a heavily leaking zinc roof, which affects cooking. Kitchen is also used to store firewood.
Store room	Yes	Recently established, cement block, in good state.	Yes	Mud construction, small and in poor condition

Gas stove + cylinder	Partly	Are shared with Binaba primary. The matron sometimes brings the gas stove with her.	Yes	Are kept in the storeroom, but not in use. Cooks don't know how to use it and training has not yet been given.
	Personal remark: the nearest places to retrieve gas are Bolgatanga or Bawku 60 km ahead, so gas is maybe not the most efficient way of cooking in rural areas.			
Bowls and Cutlery	Yes	Some 'went missing' so bowls and cutlery are not enough	Yes	Bowls and cutlery are enough. However there are no cups. DA has promised to deliver cups two years ago.
Poly tank	Yes	Most of the year the tank cannot harvest water. The solution would be a fuse connecting the borehole to the tank	No	Tank is ready to get picked up from Bolga, so will hopefully reach the school within this month
Borehole	Yes	Community borehole lies 100 meters from the school	Yes	Borehole lies on the school compound
Teacher accommodation	Yes	There are 6 rooms available, but some are still under construction. Only 1 teacher is currently accommodated. The other rooms are used to store food.	Yes	Accommodation is fully occupied, but the rooms are not enough to accommodate all teachers that are in need for a room.
School blocks	Yes	The school exists out of 6 classroom blocks (3 mud and 3 cement blocks), The mud blocks are in a very poor condition. There are no classroom blocks for both KG classes.	Yes	The school exists out of 11 classroom blocks (8 cement en 3 mud). The mud blocks are in a very poor condition. Including KG and the lower primary that are split up in p1 A/B, P2 A/B and P3 A/B there are a total of 11 classes.
Sanitation	No	Currently 5 (standing) toilets are constructed. Until that time, children resort to open defecation	Yes	There are currently 10 toilets on the school compound: 2 constructions of 5. Used by KG/Primary and JHS students. Toilets are not hygienic; teachers use the toilet in the teachers' quarters.

Furniture	Yes	But not sufficient. There is no furniture at all for both KG classes. In other classes furniture is shared between 2, sometimes 3 students. (Especially in the lower primary).	Yes	But not sufficient. Especially in both KG classes and lower primary there is not enough furniture for students to sit in pairs.
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Purchasing, preparing and distributing the food...

	TANGA KPALSAKO PRIMARY	BINABA PRIMARY
Purchasing Food	Approximately 40 % is purchased from Tanga market: Maize, millet, rice, and animals. 60% comes from Zebilla market.	At start of the program 100% was purchased from Binaba market. This narrowed down to 0%. Currently all food is purchased from Zebilla market.
	Personal remark: Stakeholders on the school level are not informed about the reason for the change of markets. The Desk Officer at the district assembly stated that all food is purchased from within the district except for those products that are not available in Bawku West e.g. oil.	
Meals	2 days a week there is a meal served through GSFP the remaining days, meals are provided through WFP. Products are stored apart from each other, obtained in different ways and separately prepared. WFP meals are regarded as 'more nutritious'. Since January 2008 there has been a meal provided every day. Fruit is seasonally, when there are local mangos.	2 days a week there is a meal served through GSFP the remaining days meals are provided through WFP. Products are stored together and meals are prepared with mixed products from both programs. Since January 2008 there has been a meal prepared everyday, however since the rainy season, cooks struggle to get the meals ready in time due to the alarming state of the school kitchen. Fruit is seasonally, when there are local mango's,
Cooks	There are 4 cooks working at the school, all appointed by community leaders and the matron. They received a one-day training on hygiene and nutrition at the DA, organised by the World food programme. One out of the 4 cooks is higher in rank. None of them are professional cooks.	There are 4 cooks working at the school, All appointed by community leaders and the matron. They received a one-day training on hygiene and nutrition at the DA organised by the World food programme. One out of the 4 cooks is higher in rank. None of them are professional cooks.

Enrolment figures and pupil teacher ratio...

	Tanga Kpalsako primary	Binaba primary
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Enrolment Figures	Before introduction of GSFP (in 2005): 238 pupils were enrolled. Current enrolment figure: 458. Due to GSFP enrolment is still increasing. Pupils 'walk away' from surrounding schools attracted by the school meal. The head teacher has put the following interventions in place to control enrolment: In KG 1,2 and P1 student are only admitted at the beginning of the school year. Students who want to enrol into P2/P6 will only be accepted if they have a transfer letter from their previous school.	Before introduction of GSFP (in 2006): 686 were enrolled. Current enrolment figure: 787 Before GSFP the school was under the feeding program of CRS. Because the budget of the GSFP is based on attendance and not on enrolment, the school has put the following intervention in place: Every pupil that reports in time gets a coupon. In this way the child comes to school in time and the school is also ensuring the fact that meals will be served to their students and not to children from outside who are attracted by a free meal.
Kinder Garden	111 pupils are enrolled in KG. There are no classroom blocks and no furniture for KG pupils. One teacher is handling both classes. KG pupils are included in the feeding program.	175 pupils are enrolled in KG 1 and 2. Both classes have their own classroom and furniture. 2 untrained teachers are handling the classes. KG pupils are included in the feeding program.
Pupil teacher ratio	Pupil teacher ratio in the primary section is 1: 57. Only 2 out of seven 7 teachers are trained teachers.	Pupil teacher ratio varies. In total there are 6 trained teachers, 1 untrained teacher and 9 community assistants. P1 consists out 149 pupils (this class is fortunately split in A1 and B1) The smallest class still consists out of 63 pupils (P6)

Management structures on the school and district level...

The SIC	The school has a functional SIC of 5 executives of whom 1 recently 'misbehaved', but a new fifth member will soon be elected. The SIC consists out of parents and teachers and comes together twice a term and in case of an emergency. The SIC is in charge of purchasing firewood, minor repairs, community mobilization, monitoring the execution of food distribution at the school level and writing monthly reports to the DA. They face challenges and are in most cases able to overcome these challenges. For example, last year during the floods the roads were not accessible for the matron's car to pass. The SIC was able to mobilize the community to bring the food from the main road to the school, using donkey charts that were made available by community members. The SIC is sensitized (not trained) on their roles and responsibilities by	The school has a functional SIC of 13 executives (the assemblywoman is one of the members and also two student prefects (1 male and 1 female). The school intends to come together twice a term, but in reality they only see each other in case of emergencies. The SIC is in charge of firewood, community mobilization, monitoring and supervision at the school level and writing monthly reports. The SIC is sensitized (not trained) on their roles and responsibilities by a GSFP official.
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	a GSFP official.	
The matron	Both schools have the same matron. The DA and GES management on the district level appoint the Matron. She is responsible for purchasing food and effective implementation of the program on the school level. She liaises between both schools, with the desk officer of the WFP, the DA and the regional office. Both schools are quite positive about the role she plays. She puts in a lot of personal effort to make sure daily meals in the school are ensured, including paying for food items in case there is a delay in funds at the national level or using her personal vehicle to transport goods. Personal remark: The matron carries the responsibility for many things e.g. purchasing food for schools and liaising with all partners. In this way the execution of the program relies heavily on the goodwill and capability of only one person. The matron of the Bawku West District is furthermore also the women organizer for a prominent political party.	
The District Assembly	The DA plays a role in selection of schools that will be included in the GSFP. They also play a monitoring role; schools are to submit a monthly report to the District Assembly and DA executives do make monitoring visits. Furthermore they have given the following assistance: <u>To Tanga Kpalsako:</u> bowls, cutlery and a poly tank. They also constructed 3 classroom blocks, a teacher quarter, the kitchen and the storeroom. They are currently constructing the toilet block. <u>To Binaba:</u> bowls and cutlery and hopefully in the near future with a poly tank and cups. No efforts have been made in school infrastructure. The recent infrastructure dates from before implementation of the GSFP.	

Community awareness and involvement...

	Tanga Kpalsako primary	Binaba primary
The community	Community awareness on GSFP program is very good, due to numerous community meetings and campaigns (organized on the national level). Community involvement in the program is also rated as good. Community members have assisted with building the school kitchen & food stores, other minor repairs are done by community members mobilized by the SIC. Furthermore, when food needs to be transported from the market to the school, donkey carts are made available. In general any community member who you ask about GSFP will be able to tell you something about it.	Community awareness on GSFP is rated as fair. However awareness amongst parents who have their wards in Binaba primary, awareness is high. Community involvement in the program is also rated as fair. Reasons given are: Binaba is the second largest town of the district: so more people and also more difficult to reach out to. Secondly a reasonable percentage of the Binaba people are 'more enlightened' and therefore more aware of government roles and responsibilities. They consider the feeding program solely as a government program and therefore their responsibility. For others poverty rate is so high that they feel reluctant to spend time and energy on something else then surviving.

	<p>Personal remark: from my personal observation I think that the size of a community plays a significant role in community involvement. Community hierarchy and internal communication are relatively easy in the smaller communities. Other factors for high or low community involvement can be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The influence, effort and commitment of chief, opinion leaders and assembly member of the community/ area. ○ Success or failure from other external programs implemented by governmental or non-governmental organizations (disappointment in external 'help' can play a role). ○ Politics, which is affecting every aspect of peoples, lives. In the Bawku West District there are examples where communities are literally divided into 2 camps where one camp does not speak to the other. This is affecting ownership and engagement of the whole community. In case of the GSFP there are many stories (that are hard to verify, but still should be taken into consideration) concerning members of one political party, deliberately trying to sabotage the program because the 'wrong party' initiated it. One of the opinion leaders of Tanga Kpalsako states that the head teacher of the school was replaced before the GSFP was launched into the school, because the former head was not willing to support the program due to his different political preference. ○ The literacy rate and level of education; in communities where only few people are educated, it is always the same few people who are asked for every committee or important function or role that needs to be filled. Not only does a small group hold all power, it is also difficult to re-elect them, because there are no other people available, and it is also difficult for them to give all the necessary attention to their various roles/functions. ○ Other conflicts that are not directly visible for an 'external eye' e.g. tribal conflicts, mistrust amongst neighbors for various reasons, jealousy, etc. ○ Extreme poverty and disasters (like last years flood) make that people's priority's are elsewhere. 	
<p>Challenges</p>	<p><u>Accessibility:</u> the road leading to the school is sandy and narrow. It is not made for cars. Especially in the rainy season, the school is hard to reach and food can only be brought into the school with help from donkey charts.</p> <p><u>Irregular and low payment of cooks:</u> This causes low motivation amongst the cooks. Every now and then cooks have to be begged and persuaded to continue their work, even tough they have not been paid.</p> <p><u>Late and irregular fund release:</u> funds from the national level almost always delay. In most cases this does not affect the programme so much because of the efforts of the matron. She pays from her</p>	<p><u>Irregular and low payment of cooks:</u> This causes low motivation amongst the cooks. At the beginning of the program cooks were paid regular, this changed without any explanation.</p> <p><u>Late and irregular fund release:</u> funds from the national level almost always delay. In most cases this does not affect the programme so much because of the efforts of the matron. She pays from her own pocket to allow the programme to continue as planned.</p> <p><u>Not enough classroom blocks, furniture and teachers to guarantee effective learning.</u> Because of the size of the classes it would be preferable to split all primary classes into two but infrastructure and lesson materials do not allow that.</p>

	<p>own pocket to allow the programme to continue as planned.</p> <p><u>Unavailability of power:</u> If the school would have power and a fridge food items like meat and vegetables could be stored for a longer period of time.</p> <p><u>Lack of classrooms and furniture</u> for KG 1 and 2, who are recently taught under trees.</p>	<p><u>Low community involvement</u></p>
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Views of the Desk Officer of GSFP at the District Level

' The Ghana School Feeding Program is a very good and ambitious intervention that will surely encourage enrolment in primary education. Challenges however are that the GSFP is often abused as a political tool and that it is hard to influence decision making at the district level. Another challenge that relates to the political influence in the program is weak monitoring structures; those in charge of monitoring are often put in charge due to their political affiliations and so monitoring becomes a ceremonial activity instead of a thorough tool to assess progress. Furthermore there is low awareness and involvement in the communities, concerning the GSFP'.

Conclusion:

Overall the program seems to be well executed in the Bawku West District. Both pilot schools are facing challenges, but the management structures put in place, at the school level, seem to work well and minor challenges can be overcome. This indicates ownership at the school level and community level. The District Assembly has made significant efforts towards e.g. infrastructure and cooking equipment. Binaba primary was already one of the 'better schools' in the district; before Binaba primary became a *GSFP school*, they were under the CRS feeding program. CRS also gave additional support to ensure adequate teaching and learning.

Based on the outcome of the case study, one can hardly state that the GSFP is running more effectively in one school over the other. Both schools have problems that

are the same, e.g. irregular release of funds, irregular payment of cooks and lack of sufficient teaching aids. On the other hand each school has their own challenges, more related to the geographical position of the school e.g. town versus village, dirt road versus tarmac road, or with the management capacities of the head teacher in place. Those challenges need a 'personal approach' where others could be solved on the regional/national level.

At the district level as well as on the school level there is a level of frustration about the level of transparency in program finance and future plans. Schools blame the DA for keeping them in the dark and the DA blames the regional offices for keeping them in the dark.

The outcome of the inventory lead by SNV is very relevant to the Bawku West district, especially when it comes to putting in additional provisions in place, in order not to compromise the quality of education. Tanga Kpalsako and Binanba primary lack basic facilities e.g. enough classrooms and furniture. But the greatest worry is the pupil-teacher ratio in both schools.

Although it is somehow questionable that there are currently only 2 schools under the GSFP, in a district where a school meal really does make a difference in school attendance, at least these schools receive maximum support and assistance from the District Assembly. This might no longer be the case if the number of schools is rapidly increased over a short period of time.

The people I talked were all very well aware of the aims and objectives of the GSFP to reduce hunger and malnutrition and increasing primary school enrolment. That the GSFP is also designed as a tool to boost local food production and empower the economical status on the household level is less part of people's perception of the program.

LIST OF INTERNATIONAL NGO'S OPERATING IN THE BAWKU WEST DISTRICT.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>LOCAT ION</u>	<u>MAJOR AREAS OF OPERATION</u>	<u>KEY ACTIVITIES</u>	<u>ANY OTHER MATTER</u>
World Vision	Zebilla	Education and secure Livelihoods	Child sponsorship, improvement of quality of education and secure livelihoods.	Only recently entered the Bawku West district (2007) Will be present for 15 years and are by far the biggest NGO operating in the district.
Action	Zebilla	Micro finance & enterprise development	-	Faced out, only run activities through CODI
IBIS		Good Governance	Training & support to local government structures. Financial support to NGO consortium.	-
Catholic Relieves Services	Tamale (DO in Zebilla)	Education	School feeding PTA/SMC training & support	Face out in 2009 Work with selected community's
Techno Serve	Bolgatanga	Agriculture & food security	Support with seeds & fertilizers. Training & demonstration. Construction of boreholes. Capacity building of local NGO's. Building storage facilities. Literacy training.	Work with selected communities
Red Cross	Zebilla	Health	Mothers groups, immunization programs	Work in the whole district
EQUALL	Saaka	Education & community development	Recruit children who are out of school, train them and enroll them in formal schools. Select and train community teachers. Assist with school furniture.	Work with (50) selected communities
World Food Program	Tamale	Education & Food Security	School Feeding	
WaterAid	Tamale	Water and Sanitation	Construction of boreholes and sanitation facilities.	
VSO	Bolgatanga (4 volunteers in Zebilla)	Education	Management support, teacher support advocacy & subject teaching through int. volunteering.	Work with government organizations (schools, DEO and DA)

African Turning Point Foundation	Zebilla	Education, health and micro finance	Construction of health center. Micro finance of women groups in town.	American NGO, solely working in Zebila town
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LIST OF LOCAL NGO'S AND CBO'S OPERATING IN THE DISTRICT

<u>NAME</u>	<u>LOCATI ON</u>	<u>MAJOR AREAS OF OPERATION</u>	<u>KEY ACTIVITIES</u>	<u>ANY OTHER MATTER</u>
Community Development Initiative (CODI)	Zebilla	Education, poverty alleviation & community/ human recourse development	Capacity building of communities. Construction of boreholes. Environmental education. Literacy training.	Work in the whole district
Binaba Area Community Health	Binaba	Water and sanitation	Construction of hand dug wells. Construction of household latrines. Health education	Work in the whole district.
Community Based Rehabilitation	Zebilla	Disabilities (especially the blind)	Eye screening. Mobility training. Community awareness programs. Micro credit.	Work in the whole district
Widows and Orphans Welfare	Bolgatanga	Empowerment of widows and orphans	Training in sea butter & soja been processing. Community awareness programs. Micro finance	
Agakodep	Binaba	Women and children's rights	Advocacy, awareness programs, micro credit	Work in Binaba Area
Anglican Diocesan Development & Relief Org.	Yelwoko	Relief, gender & health	Capacity building for community leaders. Advocacy. Awareness Programs. School clubs.	Work in Gbantongo area
Yelwoko Wo-Mens Org.	Yelwoko	Empowerment of women	Micro credit. Training in income generating activities (sewing/ guinea fowl rearing, etc.) awareness programs	Work in selected communities in Gbantongo Area
Bawku East Women Dev. Org.	Bawku	Empowerment of women/ Good governance	Promotion of women participation in decision-making.	
Center for Active Development.	Sunyani	Education, Agriculture, Water & Sanitation		Have not actively started in the district yet.
Orphans Support Center	Zebilla *	HIV aids awareness, empowerment of orphans	Micro credit	New NGO/CBO
Put People First Foundation (CBO)	Zongoire	Community capacity building & Bridge between communities & District Assembly	House visits, training of Community facilitators	Work in Zongoire area

Keeping a distance Away From AIDS (CBO)	Binaba	HIV aids awareness &	Peer education in schools Free condom distribution	Work in Binaba area
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