Achieving Equity in Basic Education in Ghana;

*Contexts and Strategies*

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Abstract

This study investigated the contextual factors for the rural–urban inequities to access and quality in basic education in Ghana and the relevant strategies to narrow the gap so as to achieve the SDG (4) on inclusive equitable quality education. The methodological paradigm used in this study is quantitative whereas descriptive survey was used as the design. The bulk of data were from responses elicited through questionnaire. These were supplemented with secondary data sources. Stratified, simple random and incidental sampling methods were combined to select the site (Basic schools in the Asunafo North Municipal of Ghana) and participants (teachers and head teachers) for the study.

The findings revealed that access to and quality in BE in Ghana is skewed in favour of urban Ghana. The inequities are orchestrated by two folds of challenges. The first group is made up of some contextual geographical, economic and socio-cultural challenges peculiar to rural Ghana. The other group is made up of some immediate challenges linked to the general loopholes in the designing and implementation of the various governments of Ghana policy on education. These are manifest in the overgeneralization of the challenges and strategies as well as targets on attaining equitable accessible quality basic education in Ghana.

It argues that the peculiar context of rural Ghana requires holistic contextualization in the execution of educational strategies through the application of rural lens. This will ensure that at the macro-level, the policy strategies adopted are responsive to the needs of each district. This will arouse popular participation necessary for tapping relevant local knowledge, content and resources for school improvement. Effective decentralization system is seen as the best medium through which the delivery of basic education service can reach marginalised rural folks. It will further ensure that, the right calibers of professionals are recruited to efficiently implement and deliver the goods of basic education policies at the micro level. Devolution of the decision making including those on recruitment, curriculum, teachers promotions and budgeting to the District Assemblies in Ghana is the obvious impetus for injecting rural-urban equity in basic education.

This study also recommended for an integrated decentralized basic education policy and strategies that are rooted in human right principle of equity. Such strategies should be tied to specific context, needs and timelines with each personnel on the basic education policy making hierarchy given a clear cut roles and targets as the trajectory for meeting the SDG (4).
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### Abbreviations and Acronyms

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>ANM</td>
<td>Asunafo North Municipality</td>
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<td>BE</td>
<td>Basic Education</td>
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<td>BSs</td>
<td>Basic Schools</td>
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<td>BECE</td>
<td>Basic Education Certification Examinations</td>
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<td>CSs</td>
<td>Circuit Supervisors</td>
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<td>Das</td>
<td>District Assemblies</td>
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<td>DEO</td>
<td>District Education Office</td>
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<td>ECE</td>
<td>Early Childhood Education</td>
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<td>ECCD</td>
<td>Early Childhood Care Development</td>
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<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West Africa State</td>
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<td>ESP</td>
<td>Education Strategic Plan</td>
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<td>GER</td>
<td>Gross Enrolment Ratio</td>
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<td>GES</td>
<td>Ghana Education Service</td>
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<td>GoG</td>
<td>Government of Ghana</td>
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<td>GLSS</td>
<td>Ghana Living Standard Survey</td>
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<td>GSS</td>
<td>Ghana Statistical Service</td>
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<td>GPRS</td>
<td>Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy</td>
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<td>GMR</td>
<td>Global Monitoring Report</td>
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<td>JHS</td>
<td>Junior High School</td>
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<td>KG</td>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
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<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>MoESS</td>
<td>Ministry of Education, Science and Sports</td>
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<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>NALAP</td>
<td>National Literacy Accelerated Programme</td>
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<td>NIB</td>
<td>National Inspectorate Board</td>
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<td>NIR</td>
<td>Net Intake Rate</td>
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<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<td>PHC</td>
<td>Population and Housing Census</td>
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<td>PTAs</td>
<td>Parents Teachers Associations</td>
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<td>Public Private Partnerships</td>
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<td>SDGs</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>SFP</td>
<td>School Feeding Programme</td>
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<td>TCAI</td>
<td>Teacher Community Assistantship Initiative</td>
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<td>TLMs</td>
<td>Teaching and Learning Materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations International Children Emergency Fund</td>
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<td>WEF</td>
<td>World Education Forum</td>
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1 Introduction

Remoteness has made rural communities across the globe susceptible to dwindling socio-economic opportunities including equitable access to good quality education (Cobbold, 2006). This has created a huge gap in access to and quality in basic education (BE) between the rural and urban milieus, especially, in the developing world (UNESCO, 2015a). Following the World Education Forum (WEF) on Education for All (EFA), Jomtien (1990) and Dakar (2000), there has been heightening global interest, commitment and cooperation in formulating and implementing educational reforms and policy strategies to uproot the blockages to equity in BE. This has resulted in massive literature and policy dissemination of strategies that hinge on human rights principles (Verger, 2014; Tomasevski, 2004) geared towards achieving the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 2, the EFA goals and the new Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on equitable accessible universal quality BE. Notwithstanding the comprehensiveness of these strategies, they seem to be too general in their approach and prescriptions as they focus more on global, regional and national contexts than the rural-urban contexts within the individual countries. The adoption, operationalisation and implementation of these strategies at the national levels also seem to suffer from the overgeneralisation based on urban bureaucratic purview. What seems to be missing therefore, is the compilation and implementation of well-tailored strategies that are in tune with the peculiar geographical, economic, and socio-cultural contexts of each milieu within a country so as to maximise outcomes in BE policy implementation towards achieving the overall targets of SDG (4).

1.1 Purpose and Justification of the Study

This study, therefore, seeks to look at educational strategies in relation to specific context so as to understand the implications of the different rural-urban contexts on equitable access to quality BE. This is to identify from the perspective of teachers and head teachers, relevant strategies and how they could be implemented to bridge the rural-urban gap in BE in Ghana. The specific objectives include the following;

1. Assess the extent to which the government of Ghana (GoG) policy strategies have addressed the inequities in her BE in the pursuance of the EFA and MDG 2 goals on free universal accessible quality BE;
2. Identity relevant strategies that can enhance rural-urban equity in access to and quality in BE based on the specific context of rural Ghana and;

3. Suggest effective ways by which the strategies identified thereof could be contextualised and implemented to narrow the rural-urban gap in BE in Ghana toward achieving the SDG (4).

This study therefore, delves into relatively less traversed area in educational policy discourse. It seeks to decipher the differences in rural-urban contexts and how they affect access and quality as well as equity in BE. This is to unravel the implications of these dichotomies on BE policy towards overall attainment of the EFA and SDG (4) on equitable accessible quality BE. Apart from enriching theory on equity, this study base of the findings, offers germane recommendations which have direct policy relevance as to how to execute policy strategies in order to narrow the rural-urban gap in BE and advance the course of the SDG (4) and EFA goals. Specifically, it will help policy makers in Ghana to become more attentive to local contexts and contents in policy planning and implementation processes. It will ensure that the execution of educational policy strategies become more efficient and responsive to the needs of rural Ghana so as to bridge the rural-urban inequity in BE.

1.2 Definition of the Research Problem

Ghana has made significant commitments towards achieving the MDG (2), EFA and SDG (4) goals on BE. These commitments are not only evident in the fact that she is a signatory to all global treaties on the right of the child to education, but are also reflected in the several reforms and policy strategies that the country had initiated in recent times toward attaining equitable accessible compulsory universal quality BE (UNESCO, 2015b). This has enable Ghana to at least achieve the MDG (2) and the EFA goals on universal access and gender parity at the primary school level. However, the overall gains on access to and quality in BE, especially at the kindergarten (KG) and lower secondary levels have not been encouraging partly due to the persistence of rural-urban inequities in her BE. As observed by the World Bank and IMF (2013) “…inequity remains a persistent feature of Ghana’s education service delivery and its most critical challenge’’ to the attainment of the overall targets on her compulsory universal quality BE drive geared toward meeting the MGD (2) and EFA targets by the 2015 deadline. Although attempts have been made to improve rural-urban equity in BE Ghana, it appears that public expenditure tend to exacerbate and perpetuate the
inequity by allocating fewer resources per child to regions with the majority of rural districts and communities (World Bank and IMF, 2013). Also, the focus on equity in Ghana seems to be tilted toward addressing the gender as well as the north-south divide in Ghana to the neglect of the rural-urban inequity. The rural-urban inequity is also partly due to the fact that the various GoG social interventions including those on education that have been rolled out are most often implemented across-board with less consideration to the peculiar context of rural communities. This does not facilitate the efficient contextualisation in terms of targeting and taking on board local needs, knowledge and content that are crucial for sustainable outcomes.

Rural communities in Ghana therefore continue to have poorly equipped basic schools (BSs) in terms of infrastructure and personnel as compare to urban Ghana (GSS, 2012). Also, enrolment, attendance, completion and transition rates, especially among girls continue to be lower in rural BSs than in urban BSs (MoE, 2013). The largest numbers of out-of-school children in Ghana are found in the rural areas. The proportion of the population which has never attended school in the rural Ghana (33.1%) is more than two times that of the urban [14.2%] (GSS, 2012; 2014). Also, due to low productivity, rural income and hence expenditure on education is about 1.5 lower than that of the urban (GSS, 2010;2014). Hence ability of households’ income to support education is comparatively lower in the rural Ghana.

Furthermore, parents and community’s involvement in schools which are crucial for efficiency and accountability as well as enhancement of pupils performance seem to be very low in rural communities due to high illiteracy level (Chowa, Masa & Tucker, 2013). Also, the performance of pupils in the national Basic Certificate Examinations (BECE) keeps on declining. Pupils pass rate, for example, dropped from 60% to 47% for the period 2001 to 2011 (MoE, 2013). The majority of the low performing BSs and pupil are from rural BSs.

Generally, rural areas, particularly, in developing countries like Ghana have some peculiar geographical, economic, social-cultural contexts which tend to breed deficit in access to equal opportunities (Cobbold 2006; Miller, 2015) including equitable quality BE. Rural settlements are mostly remote, isolated and dispersed farming and fishing communities. Hence, they are farther away from basic social services (Miller, 2015; WB and IMF, 2013). This exacerbates the problems of inaccessibility to quality BE and the attractions and retention of quality teachers (Clarke and Stevens, 2008; Cobbold, 2006; UNESCO, 2014). The incidence of poverty is also high in rural Ghana as the majority engages in primary
economic activities as a way of life rather than gainful employment (World Bank and IMF, 2013; Kabeer, 2000; World Bank, 2004). Also, rural dwellers are most often lower social class due to high illiteracy and low income. Cultural practices such as early marriage and prescribed gender roles that impede girls’ education are also common (Tomasevski, 2005; Aikman & Unterhalter, 2013). These are in contrast to that of urban areas which are within easy reach to better equipped schools, have higher income and they are very enlightened hence they have high motivation to support and demand education (GSS, 2014). These different contexts call for deliberate well-targeted policy strategies underpinned by thorough understanding of the peculiar rural context in order to narrow the gap (Clarke & Stevens, 2008).

1.3 Research Questions

The general questions that this study seeks to answer are: Given the peculiar context of rural Ghana what relevant strategies can maximise outcomes in access and quality in BE, and how can such strategies be contextualised and executed in order to bridge the rural-urban gap in access to good quality BE in Ghana? The specific research questions are:

1. What is the state of BE in Ghana after two decades of pursuing deliberate strategies toward achieving the MDG (2) and EFA goals on universal accessible equitable education?

2. In what ways can educational strategies be contextualised and executed to narrow the rural-urban inequities to access and quality in BE in Ghana toward achieving the new SDG (4)?

The above questions offer step-by-step probe into the problem under study. They thus facilitate the choice of the right frameworks and methodology towards demystifying the problem. The first question, retrospectively, seeks to unravel the state of BE in Ghana as regard rural-urban equity and the attainment of the MDG (2) and EFA targets. This is to identify the strength and the loopholes in the various GoG policy strategies on BE so as to inform the current and the future. The last question looks at the current. It seeks to identify the relevant strategies base on specific rural context. It also explores how such strategies could be contextualised and executed to enhance equity in BE and achieved the overall goal of the SDG (4) going forward.
1.4 Ghana’s Basic Education Policy Framework

This section highlights Ghana’s educational policy framework in the context of time. It also explores the BE policy implementation process. This is to help readers to understand and appreciate the policy context in which this study was done.

1.4.1 Policy Framework and Goals

Since the coming into force of the Ghana’s 1992 Republican Constitution, her educational policy framework on BE is geared toward achieving free universal quality BE for every child irrespective of location and socio-economic background (MoE, 2003). According to Ghana’s 1992 Constitution under the directive principle of state policy, Article 38 (2), states among other things that government:

“shall within two years after Parliament first meets after the coming into force of this Constitution, draw up a programme for implementation within the following ten years, for the provision of free, compulsory and universal basic education” (The 1992 Constitution of the Fourth Republic of Ghana).

In pursuance to this policy framework comprehensive programme dubbed free Compulsory Universal Education (fCUBE) policy was rolled out in 1995. It aimed at improving access to equitable good quality efficient BE consistent to MDG 2 (Little, 2010). The fCUBE focused on addressing four major interrelated problems which include access, retention, quality and relevance (GoG, 1995). With regard to access, the fCUBE seeks to expand access, especially, for girls and pupils who live in disadvantaged areas and who for social and economic reasons are somehow marginalised from the educational process. Regarding retention and efficiency, the fCUBE seeks to reduce repetition and dropout rates. Lastly, it also seeks to increase relevance of BE through quality improvement in the curriculum and school management through enhancing community and parents’ participation in and oversight over BSs in their communities (GoG, 1995; Little, 2010). The fCUBE has been the major driver of Ghana’s BE policy as all subsequent policy documents and strategies such as the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 1 & II; the 2004 Government’s White Paper on Education Reforms and; the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) covering 2003-2015 & 2010-2020 seek to reinforce and consolidate the fCUBE goals and objectives (MoE, 2010; 2013).
The GPRS was rolled out in 2002 to serve as the blueprint for eliminating poverty in Ghana. It recognised the role of education in eradicating poverty hence it has as one of its three main thematic areas the issue of quality and relevance education. It aimed at developing the nation’s human resources base through strategies that seek to create competent manpower for national development. Quality and accessible education was therefore seen as an obvious impetus of meeting the MDGs by aligning GoG policies to the EFA strategies so as to achieve universal BE (MoESS, 2005).

The GoG White Paper on Education Reforms in 2004 outlined a new portfolio of reforms with the objectives of linking schooling to the job market through alliances with private and public sector agencies. The reforms gave the structure of BE as 2 years kindergarten (KG), 6 years of primary education and 3 years of Junior High School (JHS) (MoE, 2005). The reform has a balance focus on access, equity and quality. It sought to strengthen and use kindergarten (KG) education as the cornerstone for equitable access to good quality education. Hence, a two-year free compulsory KG system was formally included in the main stream of BE in Ghana in line with the EFA (goal 1) of using early childhood care and education to advance access, quality and equity in education (Ibid). It is envisaged that KG education would reduce attrition, increase retention and completion rates in the medium term in addition to increasing access in the short term. The Reforms also proposed child’s mother tongue as the main medium of instructions at the KG and lower primary levels in line with the EFA action plan and the 2008 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNICEF & UNESCO, 2007).

The ESP is a comprehensive policy strategy rolled out in 2003 to implement the recommendations of the 2004 educational reforms and consolidate the efforts of the fCUBE. The specific strategic goals include: to provide equitable access good-quality child-friendly universal BE for all children (MoE, 2003). The ESP (2003-2015) was revised and repackaged into the ESP (2010–2020). The guiding principles of the ESP on BE include to eliminate disparities that arises from gender, exclusion and poverty consistent to EFA goal 5, improve the quality of learning and teaching in line with EFA goal 6; promote the culture of lifelong learning at all levels and for all ages, develop an effective, efficient and properly rewarded teaching service and, devolve the delivery and fiscal systems of BE management to the District Assemblies (DAs) (MoE 2010). The renewed vision is to achieve free compulsory equitable BE and life-long learning by 2020 through enhanced capacity, accountability and participation (Ibid).
Ghana Education Act, 2008 (Act 778) established three new agencies namely the National Inspectorate Board (NIB), the National Council on Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and the National Teaching Council (NTC) to advance the management goals of the ESP. The NIB is to provide external supervision to the DEOs and all pre-tertiary schools to eliminate the longstanding challenge of ineffective use of instructional contact hours, unfair deployment of teachers and the inefficient allocation and utilization of educational resources in schools so as to achieve quality in line with the ESP (2010-2020) and EFA (goal 6) (Nyavor, 2015).

According to UNESCO (2015b), Ghana’s report submitted to it at the recent WEF Incheon (2015), in pursuance of the post 2015 agenda on EFA and the SDG 4 is focused on the following:

a. increasing equitable access to and participation in quality education at all levels through: removal of any physical and financial constraints to access, bridging the gender gap in access to education, increasing access and completion at JHS level, providing all public BSs with modern toilet facilities and improved access to potable water among others;

b. improving the quality of teaching and learning especially through: efficient teacher deployment, increasing the proportion of trained teachers, efficient use of resources; and efficient accountability and monitoring;

c. promoting life skills training through: the application of ICT, strengthening the capacity for education management, and review policies to meet emerging demands among others, equip community members with life skills to manage personal hygiene, fire safety, environment, sanitation and climate change among others and;

d. Improving the management of education service delivery through efficient data management and dissemination for proper planning, policy making, programming, monitoring and evaluation among others.

Generally, Ghana’s educational policy framework is pivoted on human right approach. According to the ESP, the delivery of education to excluded people in Ghana is informed by three guiding principles. They include the right to education, the right to equality of educational opportunities, and the right and obligation to be included in and participate fully in the affairs of the society (MoE, 2010; 2013).
1.4.2 The Structure of Basic Education Policy Implementation

The District Education Office (DEO) implements education policies and programmes of Ghana Education Service (GES) within and throughout the districts. It is headed by the district director of education (DDE). The DDE is ultimately accountable to the director-general of GES at the national level through the regional director of education for his or her region. The responsibilities of the DDE include among other things the supervision and monitoring of schools within the district, dissemination of education-related strategies to all educational institutions (both public and private) in the district, organising training programmes for teachers and head teachers; provision of educational resources (including furniture, books, and infrastructural facilities), management of the capitation grant scheme; liaise between the communities, NGOs and the schools, and setting up of schools in the communities. The DDE is also responsible for providing leadership in organizations and institutionalisations of district-level support systems such as the parent teacher associations (PTAs), the school management committees (SMCs), among others for effective school administration (Egbenya, 2010; Nudzor, 2014). The activities of the DEOs are complemented by the District Assemblies (DAs)\(^1\). At the district level BSs have been grouped into geographical clusters call circuits. The circuits are coordinated by circuit supervisors (CSs) who report to DDE.

The school level forms the focal point on which the actual implementation of educational policies formulated at the national level is carried out (GOG, 2001). Three main actors undertake this task. They are head teachers, teachers and parents and together the form the PTA. The head teachers function as chief administrators of schools, and are the key implementers of change that central government has at its disposal. Their role include; conducting affairs of schools (through the pursuance of achievable and measurable objectives) to the benefit of all pupils, their parents, and the communities they serve; implementing policies set by the education authority under the overall direction and guidance of DDE; the general day-to-day administration and management of schools, and determining the job descriptions of other members of teaching staff (ibid). The teachers on the other hand are responsible for managing teaching and learning in the classrooms so as to meet the

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\(^1\) The DAs are statutory bodies created by law for the primary purpose of decentralizing government business at the local or district levels. The DA, have statutory duty for providing communities under their jurisdiction with education in accordance with national policy guidelines laid down by central government. The DAs are responsible for the development of school infrastructure and the mobilization of local communities support for the provision and delivery of BE at the local levels (Nudzor, 2014).
educational and other related needs of the pupils in tandem with government policy. They are also expected to liaise with parent, and communities to reflect the local circumstances, needs, and aspirations. Hence they are seen as the “actual” implementers of educational policy especially, those that directly impact on pupils learning outcomes (Nudzor, 2014).

Figure 1 Organisational Structure of BE Administration and Policy Implementation (Author’ construction)

Parents are another important stakeholders in BE at the local level. They are also expected to take active part in the running of the schools to ensure accountability. They are expected to
fulfil their part of the bargain relating to the cost sharing arrangement under the fCUBE by providing basic things that ensure that their children attend school regularly (GOG, 2001; Egbenya, 2010). The parents together with the teachers form the Parents Teachers Association (PTA). The PTAs plays important role in the decision making and school infrastructure development at the school level.

1.5 Rural - Urban Dichotomy in Ghana

This section highlights the rural-urban dichotomy in Ghana. This is to help readers to appreciate the rural-urban contexts in Ghana. Urban Ghana have customarily had better socioeconomic/ human development indexes and have been supplied with better social amenities than rural Ghana (GSS, 2012; 14). Table 1 summarises the rural-urban inequalities in Ghana.

**Table 1 Urban- Rural Dichotomy in Socio- Economic Development Indicators**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Predominantly Urban</th>
<th>Predominantly Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population/Districts/ Housing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
<td>49.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative regions</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Districts</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing stock</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent population</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 15 and 65+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average household size</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy rate (ability to read and write English or any other Ghanaian language) for the population 15 years+</td>
<td>56.6%</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance rate to school for the population aged 6 to 25 years for 2012/2013 academic year</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>96.6%</td>
<td>88.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school net attendance ratio between 2008-2012</td>
<td>73.8%</td>
<td>80.1%</td>
<td>67.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never attended school</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>33.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of national income household expenditure</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>65.8%</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average per capita income</td>
<td>GHS 8.4</td>
<td>GHS 11</td>
<td>GHS 5.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to improved sanitary facilities by 2011</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Electricity by households</td>
<td>70.6%</td>
<td>88.6%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.6 The Structure of the Thesis

The study is organised into seven chapters. The first chapter gives introductory background information on the study. It is followed by the theoretical framework section in chapter two. Chapter three reviews the related literature on the study. Chapter four lays down the methodology for the study. The findings from data analysis are captured in chapter five. This is followed by discussions on the major findings in chapter six. It ends with the drawing of conclusions and offering of recommendations in chapter seven.
2 Theoretical Framework

This chapter places into perspective the frameworks that informed this study. The study seeks to examine the implementation of relevant educational strategies that is informed by the specific context of a given milieu within a country driven by the goal of achieving equity in access and quality in BE. Hence, broadly, it is theoretically informed by frameworks that view the issue of equal access to good quality BE as basic fundamental human rights (UN, 1948; 1959, 2015). The issue of equal access to good quality BE is conceived globally as basic fundamental human rights. This is due to the fact that the correlation between education and the realisation of all other forms of rights is very strong (Tomasevski 2004; UNESCO, 2007). It is also complimented by theories that advocate for equity in BE and application of rural lens to BE policy so as to reach out to the most marginalised and isolated.

2.1 The Human Rights Approach to Education

The human right approach has become one of the most fashionable policy paradigms dictating the pace of educational reforms and strategies globally in recent times. Its widely acceptability hinges on the fact that it is rooted on the principle of equity, inclusiveness, and fairness. It seeks to include everybody especially, the most marginalised who may be excluded from the educational process. The human rights approach recognizes education as the biggest tool of achieving all other rights as it frees the individual from ignorant, hopelessness and marginalisation by empowering the person to realize his or her full potentials in life (Tomasevski, 2004). The rights perspective to education argues that every person, no matter the race, socio-economic background, or origin has the rights to a decent education. It is premise on the view that education prepares the learner for responsible citizenry position and social, economic and political participation (Tomasevski, 2004; 2006).

The rights approach to educational discourse was formalised following the UN General Assembly proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the year 1948. Article 26 of the declaration states among other things that:

*Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free; at least in the elementary and fundamental stages...Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms...* (UN, 1948 Article 26)
The rights approach to education was further reinforced by the 1959 Declaration of Rights of the Child which declared that every child is entitled to free compulsory elementary education base on equal opportunity. It also advocates for a special provision for children with special needs without any discrimination. Another relevant impetus is the 2003 Economic Cooperation of West Africa States (ECOWAS) protocol on Education and Training which Ghana is also a signatory to. It seeks to eliminate all forms of discriminatory acts against females by ensuring equity and full access to education for all (ECOWAS, 2003).

The rights approach to BE was further invigorated by the World Declaration on Educational for All, Jomtiem (1990) and Dakar (2000). The relevant portions of the globally agreed goals on EFA relating to BE include the following:

- **Goal 1**: Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood education, especially, for the most vulnerable children.
- **Goal 2**: ensuring that all children, particularly girls and ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free compulsory primary education of good quality by 2015 also in line with the MDG 2 of using universal primary education as an anti-poverty tool.
- **Goal 5**: eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieve gender equality in education by 2015, with focus on ensuring girls’ full and equal access to and achievement in BE of good quality
- **Goal 6**: improving all aspects of quality education and ensuring measurable outcomes in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.2

The rights strategy has been further given a new impetus and focus by the 2015 UN Sustainable Development Summit which adopted the Agenda 2030 strategy of ‘Leave No One Behind’ and the 17 new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs seek to consolidate global efforts on the MGDs and the EFA goals towards the attainment of sustainable development. The relevant portions on BE has been expressed in SDG (4) which is to attain ‘inclusive equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all’” by 2030 through the formation of stronger global partnerships for the mobilisation of the require resources and investment in education (UN, 2015). Some of the specific targets relating to BE include the following:

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2 UNESCO GMR 2000 - 2015
a. *Target 4.1*: ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality BE leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes;

b. *Target 4.2*: ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they will be ready for primary education;

c. *Target 4.7*: ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, human rights, gender equality and the promotion of cultural diversity;

d. *Target 4a*: to build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all

e. *Target 4c*: ensure the increase in the supply of qualified teachers, through effective teacher training and deployment strategies.

### 2.1.1 Rural Lens Right–Based Approach to Basic Education

A part from the larger lens of human right perspective to education, this study further narrows down to, and scaffolded by a hybrid framework dubbed ‘Rural Lens Right-based Framework to BE Policy’. This theory is a blend of Tomasevski (2004; 2006), four-fold (4-As) schema of the right-based approach to education; Carnoy’s (1999) equity-driven perspective to education reforms and policy strategy as well as Wallance and Boylon, (2009) and Clark and Stevens, (2008) rural lens approach to education.

Tomasevski (2004, 2006), four-fold (4-As) schema framework conceives that for any educational policy or programmes to be comprehensive and achieves maximum outcomes in access, quality and equity, it must take into account the importance and the interrelation between four key concepts of availability, accessibility, acceptability, and adaptability to education.

**Availability**: Availability to education is the first condition for access to quality and equitable education. It entails adequate provision of educational infrastructure and facilities as well as quality human resources to man these facilities. It also includes making education free and accessible to all. Making BE available require strategies of sustainable funding so as to

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3 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4
universalise access by progressively eliminating any financial obstacle to access (Tomasevski, 2004).

**Accessibility:** Accessibility to education is also a significant precondition for the actualization of the right to and equity in education. It espouses that BE should not only be physically and economically within the reach of even the most marginalized, but it should also be non-discriminatory (Tomasevski, 2004; 2006). It entails governments and international obligations to ensure access to education for children (Ibid). Making education accessible and equitable require strategies that eliminate inequalities and bridge the physical distance between children and the schools (Ibid).

**Acceptability:** Acceptability in education is also crucial precondition for the realization of the right in and through equitable education (Tomasevski, 2004). It is one that is relevant in term of content and context, of good quality, learner-driven, deliver in safe and democratic environment by qualified teachers. Acceptability espouses strategies that promote democracy in the learning process and equal educational experiences in schools (Tomasevski, 2004; 2006; Akyeampong, 2005; UNICEF, 2000).

**Adaptability:** Adaptability on the other hand hinges on context or relevance. It requires strategies that adopt schooling to children; encourage community participation and decentralisation of curriculum and the decision making process (Tomasevski, 2004; 2006). It also entails balancing compulsory education and parental choice in conformity to their religious, moral and philosophical convictions. The above concepts are rooted in the human rights approach as affirmed by the key international and regional treaties.

Carnoy (1999), equity–driven perspective to educational reform and policy framework on the other hand argues that educational reforms and policy execution must be pivoted on strategies that enhance equality and fairness within education so as to facilitate social mobility (Carnoy 1999). Its thrust is that since educational attainment is the most significant underlying determinant for social positions and corresponding income (Kubow & Fossum, 2007), equalising access to quality education injects social equity, social stability and cohesion (UNICEF & UNESCO, 2007). The equity- driven perspective therefore advocates for educational reforms and policy strategies that focus on reaching out to and uplifting the most socially vulnerable groups such as the rural folks, with at least quality BE as the economic and social returns is always very high (UNESCO, 2010; Carnoy, 1999).
Clark and Stevens (2008) and Wallace & Boylan (2009) rural lens approach to education is pivoted on Ankrah-Dove, 1982 ‘rural challenged’ and Cobbold (2006) ‘rural deficit’ models which depict the difficulties of education in remote rural communities. The difficulties are evident in inaccessibility, low attention and poor resourcing of rural schools at the expense of urban ones. The rural lens approach also take into cognisance that rural communities are distinguished by a unique sense of place and social-cultural values which tend to affect education. But, if these are properly understood can be harnessed for the improvement of education (Clark and Stevens, 2008). The proponents of the rural lens therefore argue that policy makers need to adopt a new perspective through the application of rural lens rather than their continuous urban bureaucratic purview (Wallance and Boylon, 2009). They must appreciate that in pursuing for equitable and just society through education, it is not only bigger urban schools that matter, but also, small rural schools, which are most often mistakenly regarded as low status institutions (Clark and Stevens, 2008). At the individual level application of rural lens helps the policy maker to become appropriately attuned to sense of place by getting deeper understanding and appreciation of the peculiar geo-socio-economic dynamics of a given rural setting so as to tailor policy strategies to the specific context and needs in order to achieve lasting transformation (Clark and Stevens, 2008).

From the Rural Lens Right-based Framework to BE Policy model as depicted in fig 2. The conceptualisation of this study is that equity is the main theme rooted in the human rights approach as it socialises the concepts of access, quality, and context/relevance into a web of intricate relationships such that the exclusion of either one of the three in any educational strategy will only breed inequity. It argues that enhancing rural-urban equity in BE in developing countries requires holistic policy strategies which are:

- a. rooted in the human right principle of fairness, equity and justice that seek to target and reach out to the most vulnerable children in society with social safety net programmes;
- b. relevant to the specific geographical, social, cultural and economic context of a given milieu within a country and;
- c. given adequate rural lens
The four-fold (4-As) and the equity-driven frameworks complement each other very well in offering a deeper insight to the problem under investigation. The four-fold (4-As) framework focuses and provides insight to strategies of extending the frontiers of equitable quality BE at all cost and by all means by making it more available, accessible, quality, and relevance. The equity-driven framework to educational reforms also advances insight to strategies that eject fairness and justice in the process of making BE more available, accessible, relevance and of good quality to various milieus within a country. The hybrid theory takes the argument further by advancing how educational strategies ought to be implemented so as achieve rural-urban equity in access and quality in BE. Whereas the four-fold (4-As) framework support the first research questions, the equity-driven framework also supports the second question. However, the hybrid theory supports all the two research questions. The frameworks do not only help in articulating the research questions, but they also helped to properly situate the methodology of this study. Also, the frameworks correspond very well to the key concepts—access, quality, equity and context which were explored by this study.

Figure 2: The Rural Lens Right–Based Approach to Basic Education (Author’s construction)
2.2 Concepts and Definitions

Base on the theoretical review and conceptualisation, this study therefore explored the following concepts: access, quality, equity in BE and relevance/context.

Access

Access to education is the equal opportunity for individual to participate in education irrespective of location, gender and status (UNICEF and UNESCO, 2007). UNESCO Institute of Statistics defines access to BE by analysing input indicators such as Gross Enrolment Ration (GER), percentage of new Grade 1 intake with preschool (ECCE) intake, Net Intake Rate (NIR), Gross Percentage of Girls Enrolment, public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP among others. In addition, the OECD includes indictors such as enrolment rate by age, and transition characteristics from age 15-20 by level of education as some of the indicators for access. However, this study operationally defines access as the ability to enter and complete the full cycle of BE, that is, two years of kindergarten (KG), six years of primary and three years of lower secondary. It does not finish with just making an entrée to a school, but an ongoing process of accessing all levels or grades of BE. The key variables of access that were explored included availability (number) of schools, accessibility (proximity) to school, affordability, enrolments attendance and completion rates.

Quality

UNICEF (2000), identified five determinants of quality of education and equity issue embedded in it base on the rights-based perspective. They include the learner characteristic, the issue of environment and context, inputs regarding content and educational resources as well as quality processes and outcomes. The learner characteristics includes the previously learnt capabilities that the learner brings on-board the learning process. It also takes into consideration the socio-economic background of the learner (UNICEF, 2000). It also includes laying strong foundation for access and quality through the early childhood education (ECE) as well as the active involvement and the role of parents.

Context or environment, on the other hand, encompasses the physical and the social surroundings including safe, healthy democratic environment of the school as well as the available facilities and class size. It also includes the societal values and attitudes, social
status and national policies on education (UNICEF, 2000; UNESCO, 2009; Verger, 2014). These are necessary pre conditions for equity and quality in BE. Tikly & Barrett (2013), also identified three main determinants of equity in quality education in relation to context to include policy environment, school environment, and home/society environment. They argued that the policy environment which includes government reforms and policy strategies on curriculum, teachers, and governance are the most powerful determinant of equity in quality. Tikly & Barrett (2013), also posited that quality of education can be defined in terms of context when it hinges on the principles of inclusion, participation and relevance. Hence equity in quality should take into considerations the values of effectiveness, efficiency, equality relevance and sustainability condition of a particular milieu.

Also, quality issues relating to content encompass effective, flexible and relevant and learner friendly curriculum as well as efficient and responsive school time tabling system. Content is also viewed in relation to local context (UNICEF, 2000). Inputs also, deals with the availability and utilisation of educational resources. The success of teaching and learning is influenced by the availability of materials and human resources as well as their efficient management. Equity in quality therefore, depends on availability and fair distribution of these resources. Lastly, outcomes look at the measurable educational and learning objectives. They include achievement in tests and examinations, fulfilment of national goals and targets as well as the individuals’ personal fulfilments as evident in indicators such as transition, completion and literacy rates (Ibid). For the purpose of this study therefore, quality is operationally defined as education of some reasonable standard that is available and accessible to all, which provides equal educational experiences and help to develop the capabilities (cognitive, communicative and the affective skills) of the individual so that the individual becomes useful to him or herself and the society. Indicators that were measured included inputs like the availability of facilities and TLMs; quality, quantity and motivation of teachers. Other include processes such distribution of teachers, level of parents’ and community participation in school and attainment of national goals.

**Basic Education and Equity in Basic Education**

International and national policy texts used several parlances including elementary and foundational education to describe BE. Hence it is one that meets the basic learning needs of the individual (UNESCO, 2007). In recent times, development in national and international
legislation and declarations mostly define BE into three stages: Early childhood care and development, primary and lower secondary education. Others also define it to include both formal and informal education including adult literacy programmes (Ibid). The concept of BE was formally birthed out of the Jomtien (1990) World Declaration on Education for All. It was further broadened to include the issue of right to education both quantitatively (for all) and qualitatively (development of human personality and fulfilling other rights). This has influenced many countries including Brazil, Nigerian and Ghana to extend the scope of BE to include the phrase free, compulsory and universal to give credence to the alienable rights that every person must have in and within it (UNESCO, 2007). International and national policy strategies on BE in recent times therefore place much emphasis on equal access and quality in BE. According to the Dakar (2000) Framework of Action on EFA, the globally agreed educational goals on BE are geared towards: widening and improving early childhood care and development, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children; ensure that at least every child everywhere including the disadvantaged have access and complete the full cycle of free compulsory quality primary education; eliminate gender disparities in primary education; and achieve gender equality in basic and secondary education (UNESCO, 2000).

The post-2015 agenda as expressed in SDG (4) sees BE as one which is equitable, inclusive, of good quality and provide life-long learning opportunities for all (UN, 2015). This study, therefore, operationally defines BE as a three tier system of two years of KG, six years of primary and three years of JHS (MOE, 2005) whose purpose is to meet the basic learning needs of every child by providing a broad pool of knowledge and basic skills to everyone to live a fulfilling life (UNESCO, 2007).

Equity in BE focuses on equality between gender group, people of different locations, socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds (World Bank, 2004). However, the parameters for measuring equity and strategies of uprooting inequity must be country and area specific in order to reach out to the most excluded segment of the society (UNESCO, 2010). According to International Commission on Education Twenty-first Century (1996) report presented to UNESCO (1996):

“Basic education is the first step in attempting to attenuate the enormous disparities affecting many groups- women, children, rural population, the urban poor, marginalised ethnic minorities and millions of children not attending school and working” (p.118).
Accessible quality education according to UNESCO (2012), is “one that is effective for purpose, has enduring development relevance, is equitable, is resource efficient and translates into substantive rather than symbolic access” (UNESCO GEQAF, 2012. p .12). The issue of inequity in access to quality education perpetuates social inequalities that are linked to income, social progression, income and status (Kubow & Fossum, 2007).

Generally, equity in BE require strategies that seek to create the right environment in school and in the classroom for inclusive quality teaching and learning as well as equal supply of educational inputs for all irrespective of location and status for the attainment of equal outcomes (UNICEF, 2000; UNESCO, 2009 ; 2012). Here, deliberate strategy that attracts and maintains quality teachers in disadvantaged schools where teachers are likely to refuse postings due to remoteness and isolation, ethnicity, language and gender is very crucial (UNESCO, 2005; 15a).

This study therefore, defines equity in BE as fairness in distribution and equal access of educational inputs, opportunities, experiences and outcomes between rural and urban milieus. It also entails equal participation in quality of education for all irrespective of location. Indicators that were explored include comparisons of the selected indicators for access and quality between the rural and urban areas.

**Contextual, Relevant and Strategy**

Lewin (2007), advanced the need to adopt a well-tailored strategy to be in tune with the different contexts between and within countries and regions. Clark and Stevens (2008) also argued that policy maker must appreciate the distinctiveness of rural environment at the macro level and how it differs from the urban milieu. He argued further that policy and decision making processes must be re-examined to embrace the application of rural lens rather than the overconcentration on urban bureaucratic purview. Hence context is used by this study to mean the unique geographical, economic and socio-cultural characteristics of a given milieu that affect a given phenomenon either positively or negatively. Relevant is also used to mean appropriateness to a given context. Policy strategies or interventions on the other hand express deliberate set of actions that seek to cause a positive change in human endeavor. This study therefore, views contextual strategies as policies, plans, programmes, interventions, frameworks, practices and targets that take into consideration the unique and the specific condition of a particular milieu as well as individual such that it is in tune with peculiar
context and needs of the intended people/individual so as to achieve a lasting impact. The different geographical, economic and socio-cultural contexts between rural and urban milieu and how they impact on equitable access to quality BE were gauged.

In summing up this Chapter, therefore, this study conceptualised BE as fundamental human right issue. It is the bedrock for creating equitable just fair and stable society. Hence its provision is seen as international and national obligations. The process of making BE more available, accessible, adaptable and acceptable requires strategies that inject equity and include all and sundry irrespective of location and socio-economic background. The next chapter reviews relevant literature that views BE as human right issue. It also explores cases of education policy and strategies that seek to increase equity between people of different geographical, economic and socio-cultural background base on human right principle of equity.
3 Literature Review

This chapter reviews literature on access to and quality in BE that hinges on human rights principle of equity. It starts with those that advocate for human rights approach to BE based on national and global obligations as enshrine in several international treaties on the right to education. It continues to reviews those that espouse global and regional strategies for enhancing access, quality and equity in BE. It further deals with those that present findings on linking educational strategies to specific regional and national contexts. The last section reviews related studies on Ghana geared towards addressing the issue of inequities in her BE.

3.1 Global approach to Basic Education

Universal access to equitable quality BE is conceived globally as human rights issue (UN, 1948; 1959). Human rights approach to education argues that every person, no matter the race, location and socio-economic background should have the right to education of some reasonable standard (UN, 1948; 1959; UNESCO, 2002; 2010). It is pivoted on the goal that education prepares the individual for social, economic and political participation which is necessary for social cohesion. It socialises the young that rights are naturally and sacredly inherent in the individual and that the rights to education is the individual greatest asset independent of any other person (Tomasevski, 2004; 2006; UNICEF & UNESCO, 2007).

The provisions on the rights to equitable accessible quality BE is enshrine in several international and regional treaties and declarations of which Ghana is a signatory to such as the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Dakar (2000) Framework of Action on EFA, the 1960 Convention against Discrimination in Education, the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, The MDGs /the Post-2015 (Agenda 2030) on the 17 new SDGs. The regional ones include the Lome Convention; the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and the ECOWAS Protocol on Education and Training among others. These treaties and declarations rally global support and partnerships and enjoin national governments to implement right-based policies that seek to make at a least good quality universal BE more available, accessible, relevant and equitable to all (UNICEF, 2007; UNESCO, 2015a)
According to UNICEF & UNESCO (2007), the rights-based approach to education embodies three interconnected dimensions which include the right to access, the right to quality, and the right to dignity within education. The right to access entail the right to education for all on the basis of equality of opportunity and without any shred of discrimination. It rallies governments and stakeholders to be committed to policies or strategies that make education available for, accessible to and inclusive of all children (Ibid). The right to quality entails the right to education of appreciable standard. Safeguarding this right requires strategies that are child-centred, relevant, appropriately resourced, and monitors the progress of each learner (Ibid). The right to respect within the learning environment also espouses the right that every child has to be protected as regard his or her inherent dignity within the education system. Achieving this also require policy and strategies that hinge on democratic ideals of promotion of diversity and freedom consistent with human rights. These include promotion of equal respect for every child, providing opportunities for meaningful participation, and prevention of all forms of violence, as well as respect for language, culture and religion (UNESCO & UNICEF, 2007; Kendall, 2008).

3.2 Strategies to Equitable Access to Basic Education

Global efforts of increasing equity in access to BE focus on strategies that seek to eliminate the obstacles to availability, accessibility and affordability to school (Tomasevski, 2004). These strategies mostly aim at targeting and hooking vulnerable groups, such as ethnic minority, girls, the poor, people with disability, and people in risk areas and rural dwellers that are most likely to be excluded to the educational process (Allen, 2011; Kabeer, 2000; Tomasevski, 2005; Schwartzma, 2005; Muralidharan & Prakash, 2013). Social safety programmes such as the abolition of fees, cash transfer and school feeding programmes as well as others that focus on improving ECCD and girls’ education have become very important in the South (UNECO, 2010; 2015).

3.2.1 Abolition of fees

Eliminating school fees and lowering other indirect cost associated with textbooks, school uniforms and other hidden fees is the first step of making BE affordable hence accessible to the vulnerable in the society (UNESCO, 2010; USAID, 2007). Several studies in Africa and
South America have revealed that school fees is the biggest barrier to accomplishing the EFA goals on access to equitable quality BE (USAID, 2007; UNESCO, 2010). The argument that has been advanced in favour of abolition of school fees and other related indirect costs in developing countries is that the majority of the world’s marginalised and poorest people are located in this part of the world, especially, in the rural areas. Therefore, abolition of fees is likely to give more opportunity to children from poor households to access BE. This has the potential of injecting equity in access to quality BE (UNESCO, 2010; USAID, 2007).

Studies in some 15 Sub-Saharan Africa countries including Malawi and Uganda where school fees have been abolished in one form or the other by the year 2000, have recorded sustain increase in enrolments and has narrowed that gap in access between advantaged and disadvantaged groups within a country (UNESCO, 2015a). In Uganda, abolition of school fees in the primary and lower secondary levels almost doubled the enrolment rate. It has also led to the reduction of late entry to school and its twin problems of over-age enrolments and drop out, especially among girls and children in rural areas (Deininger, 2003 in UNESCO, 2015a).

It has been argued, however, that abolition of tuition fee only does not necessary translate into elimination of cost to education (USAID, 2007). There are other indirect costs aside school fees such as transportation, feeding, levies for school repairs, cultural and sporting activities, cost on text books and stationary, and school uniform, as well as other hidden fees charged on parents which are still major hindrances to access. Therefore, what is crucial is the total elimination of any form of cost borne by poor households when the child is going to or is in school (USAID, 2007; UNESCO, 2015a).

Also, it has been argued that the abolition of fees can cripple quality if it is not accompanied by the required expansion in facilities. A significant increase in enrolment causes: imbalance in the pupil-teacher ratio, overcrowding in class rooms and put stress on TLMs and other resources in schools (USAID, 2007; Osei, Owusu & Afutu-Kotey, 2009). In Malawi for example, the abolition of school fees increased the pupils to teacher ratio to 62:1, pupils to classroom to 199:1 and pupil to text book of 24:1. Similar in Ghana, the increasing enrolment has exacerbated the challenge of supply of quality teachers, especially to the rural areas. The infrastructure though expanded, is yet to meet the rising numbers (Little, 2010). Another associated problem of abolition of fees, especially, in developing countries is the problem of sustainable funding. This is evident in underfunding of education in most developing
countries. This has led to deterioration in quality. For example, in Malawi public expenditure per-pupil fell approximately by 12 per year for primary school pupils (USAID, 2007).

Tomasevski (2004), therefore argued that one of the best ways of strategising for universal access and monitoring access to quality education in relation to affordability in light of the right-based approach is to deal with the key issue of “correspondence between budgetary allocations for equitable accessible quality education and government obligation under international human rights treaties and declarations, as well as her national obligation toward the citizenry. Therefore, in order not to reduce free education to a mere rhetoric or symbolic gesture requires a real commitment on the part of the state in order to ensure that abolition of fees translate into access to good quality education for all. This she argued requires that budgetary allocations take into consideration the estimated cost of accessible quality education for each citizen. This suggests the need for governments to be proactive and adopt good governance mechanisms to manage the national wealth for the good of the people. It also requires innovative ways to raise the needed funds through efficient taxation system to provide affordable quality education for all (USAID, 2007; UNECO, 2014; 2015). Another argument against abolition of fees is that it cripples community participation and ownership of schools. Voluntary family and community support to education notwithstanding the quantum increases their commitments to and ownership of the schools in their communities. This is vital for efficient school management and outcome (USAID, 2007).

3.2.2 Cash Transfer Programme

Conditional cash transfer policy, where parents are given some amount of cash on condition of ensuring the regular attendance to school by their children has successfully been used, especially, in Latin America as a strategy to enhance access to school among marginalised and poor communities (Schwartzma, 2005). It has been argued that cash transfers increases human capital investment in poor families thereby freeing them from the vicious cycle of poverty by breaking its channel of transmission from one generation by promoting child health, nutrition, and schooling (Fiszbein & Schady, 2009; Tomasevski, 2005).

Studies in South America have revealed that most cash transfer programmes have made positive impact on access to BE in the areas of enrolment, attendance, and retention (UNESCO, 2015). Experiences of the Brazillain Bolsa Escola, Ecuadorian Bono de Desarollo Humano, the Colombian Familias en Accio cash transfer programmes showed that the impact
is maximised when it is design to properly target areas where poverty, remoteness, gender and social-cultural practices tend to alienate children from school (Souze, 2006; Schwartzma, 2005). For example, in Brazil cash transfer policy increased enrolment in school among children from the poorest households, mostly rural, by about 10%. This is in contrast with children from average and well-to-do households which enrolment was not significantly affected (Souze, 2006). It also increased attendance rate to school by 10% among rural children as against 0.5% for urban children (Helfand & Souze).

According to UNESCO (2015a), cash transfer programme as a strategy for access is becoming popular in Africa countries. About 21 countries including Kenya, Malawi, Ghana and Zambia have some form of cash transfer programmes. However, some of these programmes have taken distinctly different dimensions which are mostly unconditional. Evidence from Morocco indicate that the impact of cash transfer programme has been remarkable on school attendance and somehow on the achievement levels in arithmetic and numeracy skills among children from poor rural families (Benhassine, Devoto, Duflo, Dupas, & Pouliquen, 2015).

It has been argued however that, cash transfer programmes do not always eliminate blockage to access in terms of affordability among excluded people, especially if the implementation process is not effective. Poor targeting of conditionalities, lack of consistent financial inflows and locally sustainable initiatives have been identified as some of the bottlenecks to successful implementation of cash transfer programmes (World Bank, 2006; 2012; UNESCO, 2015a). In Africa, the greatest bottleneck has been the issue of funding as most of these programmes are donor dependent. Experiences from sub-Saharan Africa countries have shown that the overconcentration of donor support tend to cripple locally sustainable initiatives for funding. The sustainability of those programmes are endangered whenever the aids are withdrawn (UNESCO, 2015a). Also, the unlimited conditions and rather high specific targets tend to stifle the impact of cash transfer programmes. Cases of the Ecuadorian and the Philippines’ cash transfer programmes have shown that conditions are hard to enforce and targets are difficult to attain if the conditions and targets are not set in active consultations and participation of beneficiary localities (Word Bank, 2009; UNESCO, 2015a).
3.2.3 School Feeding Programme

School feeding programme (SFP) have become one of the most popular social protection programmes for increasing access to BE opportunities in developing countries in recent times. It has multiple objectives of increasing enrolment; improve child health and enhancing their competencies. According to the World Food Programme (WFP) (2013), SFP has reached about 360 million children by 2013. Several studies have revealed a positive correlation between SFPs on one hand and GER, school attendance, reduction in drop-outs and test-performance in numeracy and arithmetic skills at the primary level of education (Ahmed & Badu, 2007).

Also, SFP has also been found to be very effective strategy in ejecting equity in access to quality BE as it reduces disparities to access, acquisition of competencies and nutritional status among children of different gender, socio-economic, geographical settings (Allen & Gillespie, 2001). According to Allen & Gillespie (2001), SFP tends to induces greater participation in school among poor and marginalised group than those from well-to-do background and the less marginalised groups. For example, in Bangladesh, Food for Education (FFE) programme led to 44% increase in enrolment for girls as against 28% increase for boys (Ahmed, 2004). Evidence from reviews of SFPs in 32 Sub-Saharan Africa countries, including Ghana showed that the impact tends to be greater among children from poor households mostly in deprived rural and urban slums where food is seen as incentive to attending school (UNESCO, 2015a). In Burkina Faso and Uganda, SFP increased enrolment in school by some 6–26 % and the figure tends to increased depending on how deprived a particular area is (WFP, 2013).

3.2.4 Girls’ Education

One of the global challenges to universal access to and equity in BE in low and middle income countries has been the issue of low enrolment and completion of girls, especially among indigenous population (UNESCO, 2014; 15a). Global commitment toward the EFA frameworks has contributed in narrowing the gender gap in education, however, the gap is still wide in the rural areas of sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia. Available data from 28 countries show that, there are still fewer than nine girls in school for every ten boys (ibid). Also, data in Pakistan show that there is no discernible gender gap for the wealthiest urban households, however, only a third of girls from the poorest households, mostly in rural
areas, are in school. Among the Kurdish-speaking girls in Turkey, 43% from the poorest households have less than two years of education, with national average of 6%. This picture is similar to Nigeria where about 97% of poor Hausa-speaking girls in the north have fewer than two years of education (UNESCO, 2010). In Niger, about 70% of the poorest girls had never attended school as compared with 20% of the richest boys (UNESCO, 2015a). This inequity is fuel by history, religion, social cultural norms such as early marriage and prescribed gender roles which tend to tie the girl-child to house-keeping duties and alienate them from equally accessing BE.

Achieving equity and just society requires a conscious effort in adopting discriminatory contextual policies that are favourable to girls in order to lift them from the bottom of educational ladder. Education is the most potent lever that can provide girls with adequate choices to advance in life (Tomasevski, 2005). Global efforts to increase access for girls in BE have included strategies that seek to extend incentives to parents to invest their education and increasing the availability of, and thereby access to schools for girls. These include the establishment of special schools for girls, and the recruitment and training of female teachers to serve as role models (Aikman & Unterhalter, 2013). However, the impact has been minimal. This is due to the fact that the challenges to girls’ education are social-culturally and historically induced more than the issue of availability and affordability of schools. Strategies that seek to change attitudes that diminish the value of girls’ education, along with practical policies that create incentives for their greater participation in BE are very crucial (UNESCO, 2015a). According to Tomasevski (2005), in order for such strategies to thrive, the first hurdle is to eliminate the culturally and historically constructed inferior gender roles that society has prescribed for women in both private and public life. Also, In Sub-Saharan Africa, early marriage and pregnancy which have links to the culturally gender prescribed women’s roles have been the major blockages to access, especially among rural girls. As observed by Tomasevski (2005):

*Rural communities usually consider that a girl is no longer a child when she has her first menstruation. This is when initiation rites take place or are concluded and she is ready for married life. Some rural communities practice initiation rites on girls even before their first menstruation, sometimes when they are only seven years old ..., in Gabon ‘children aged 10 could be married although the legally set minimum age is 15. In Eritrea, the minimum age for marriage is 18 but ‘girls are often betrothed between the ages of 6 and 8 (Tomasevski, 2005 P.4).*
Freeing girls from these socio-culturally constructed blockages to girls’ access to BE call for deliberate strategies that specifically target poor rural and disadvantage communities with public campaign on girl’s education as well as reproductive education, sanitary programmes and incentives for marginalised girls. In Turkey, educational reforms which sought to expand school participation for girls from poor households by providing them with incentives couple with national awareness campaign on girl-child education, have increased girls’ enrolment (Sasmaz, 2014 in UNESCO, 2015a). In India a national programme that seeks to increase demand for schooling among rural and disadvantage girls complemented by strategies such as back-to-school-camps, free text books and bicycle for girls, and training and recruiting more female teachers have improved access and quality and equity in primary and lower secondary school education (Govinda, 2008 in UNESCO, 2015a; Muralidharan & Prakash, 2013).

### 3.2.5 Overcoming Inaccessibility to Basic Education

Studies in Africa and Asia have shown that long distance to and fro school can be a major barrier to equitable access to BE in remote rural areas (Humphes & Crawford, 2014; Muralidharan & Prakash, 2013). Rural areas are mostly remote isolated farming; pastoral and fishing communities hence are relatively farther away from schools and are also inaccessible due to poor transportation network (Amoako, 2010; Miller, 2015). Bridging the distance between children and their schools is therefore one of the prerequisite for enhancing rural-urban equity in access to BE.

Strategies for increasing geographical or physical accessibility include the provision of new schools in communities where there are no schools and; provision of cheap reliable means of transport for children to and fro schools (Humphes & Crawford, 2014; Muralidharan & Prakash, 2013). School availability has a direct impact on access and quality as insufficient supply to meet demand leads geographical inaccessibility as well as over-crowded classrooms (Humphes & Crawford, 2014). Making school more available requires that governments increase its expenditure to expand BE to all communities, especially, marginalised rural communities so as to reach every child (UNESCO, 2010). This requires sustainable funding through efficient mobilisation of resources through taxation, efficient exploitation of national resources and prudent financial administration to prevent dissipation of national resources through corruption (UNESCO, 2014). For example Ecuador undertook efficient tax reforms in 2003. The country widened its tax net, and renegotiated contracts with oil companies and
places a higher priority on education. These have resulted in tripling in educational expenditure between 2003 and 2010 which has contributed to massive expansion in educational infrastructure (UNESCO, 2014).

Providing a flexible and cheap means of transport to and fro school on the other hand, is another relevant strategy that can be explored to enhance access to and equity in BE. A study in India has shown that the provision of bicycles to children can improve enrolments and attendance, especially, among rural girls at the secondary school level (Muralidharan & Prakash, 2013). Also, NGOs have been found to be more flexible in reaching out to hard-to-reach isolated, nomad and traditional fishing communities as well as groups such as child labourers, drop outs and children with disabilities with BE (UNESCO, 2010). In Bangladesh, a non-government organization developed a system dubbed ‘floating schools’ that was able to reached marginalised communities, whose livelihood depends on their moving about on boats, with BE (Ibid).

### 3.3 Strategies for Equitable Quality Basic Education

Globally, strategies that holds prospect for attaining, maintaining and monitoring quality and equity in BE include: provision of adequate facilities and TLMs.; defining appropriate goals and context through relevant curricula; investment in teachers’ professionalism and efficient teacher deployment programmes; enhancing incentives for teachers; improving accountability in school management through parents and community participation. Others include laying a strong foundation for quality and equity through the early childhood education, as well as those that focus on the learner to ensure acquisition of new knowledge and life skills and develop the individual capability are also necessary prerequisite for equity in quality (Acheampong, 2004; UNESCO, 2000; 2005).

#### 3.3.1 Early childhood Education

The strategy of planning, designing, providing and expanding holistic early childhood education (ECE) has become a powerful tool for increasing access, quality and equity in BE globally after the 2000 World Education Forum which culminated into goal 1 of the Dakar Framework of Action on EFA (UNESCO, 2014; 2015a). It has been recognised as the
cornerstone upon which the attainment of universal equitable accessible quality education can be best erected (Myers, 2004; UNESCO, 2015; Barnett, 2008). According to (Berlinski, Galiani, & Gertler, 2009), laying a strong foundation for access to good quality ECE has a lasting impact on a child’s educational outcome which become evident in later years of a child development. Evidence from ECE policies in Peru, Colombia, Morocco and Sub-Saharan Africa countries have revealed that Early Childhood Care Development (ECCD) has a positive correlation with attendance, retention, progression completion rates as well as health and competency acquisition. It is also an avenue for achieving equity in access among people of different location, socio-economic background and gender (Myers, 2004; UNESCO, 2015a).

In Sub-Saharan Africa countries, unavailability, geographical inaccessibility and poverty have been the greatest obstacles to ECE policy as a conduit for equity. An integrated approach where ECE policy is link with food-nutrition programmes, abolition of fees and other Cash transfer programmes have been recommended as the panacea to successfully implement ECE policy so as to uproot inequities in BE (Myers, 2004; UNESCO, 2015a).

### 3.3.2 Relevant and Flexible Curriculum

Achieving quality and equity in BE also requires flexible and relevant curriculum that response to national, local and the learner needs (Schweisfurth, 2013). According to Marzano (2003) notwithstanding the tremendous time and energy an educational system or a school district may devote in designing the intended curriculum (the curriculum as exist in text), there is often time there is little attention devoted for the implemented curriculum (what teachers actually teach) and even less to the attained curriculum (what the students have learnt). In order to achieve quality and equity, there is the need to make conscious effort to bridge the likely gap that may arise during planning and implementation of the curriculum in order to achieve its enshrined objectives. This requires wider participation and inclusion of local knowledge and context in the planning and the implementation stages (Schweinfurt, 2013).

Schweisfurth (2013), also posited that flexible and relevant curriculum that seeks to adopt schooling to learner’s context through the promotion of child-centred primary practice in literacy, numeracy and problem-solving in the teaching and learning process are essential for attainment of quality and equity in education. Others that seek to promote equal educational
experiences, participation and democratic values in schools and classrooms are also pertinent. These also required well trained and experience teachers who understand the needs of every child and design appropriate task to meet the child’s needs (Akyeampong; 2005: Schweisfurth, 2013).

3.3.3 Teachers’ Potential to Eliminate Inequities

Teacher policy is very important to achieving quality and equity in education since they are at the core of implementation of any successful educational policy. Hargreaves (2006), and UNESCO (2014), recommended the following strategies for harnessing teachers’ potential to eliminating inequities in quality. They include: filling teachers gap by posting more and qualified teachers to marginalised areas where there is acute shortage as in the case of South Korea teacher deployment policy; attracting the best candidate into teaching and training teachers to meet learners’ needs as in the case of Finland; retaining the best and experience teachers through competitive working conditions and career development as in the case of South Korea. Also, those which focus on school-based in-service training are crucial to increase teachers’ competencies (Akeampong, 2005).

3.3.4 Decentralisation and Community Participation

Tikly & Barrett (2013), observed that in order to reconstruct education quality base on justice and equity, requires increased participation by parents and communities in the decision making process in schools. They argued thus in setting educational goals, consideration should be given to the learners’ needs, and parents’ values and persuasions as well as the interest of the wider community and the nation. Strategies that instil a sense of community ownerships and increase their participation in the school affairs are very important for efficient resources mobilisation, planning and management of the schools. Akeampong (2005), identified decentralisation of school governance where the School Management Committees (SMCs), and Parent–Teacher Associations(PTAs) are given adequate authority and autonomy in the decision making process, including appointments of teachers as very relevant to improving quality and equity. This is even more crucial in rural areas of developing countries where low community and parents’ participation in schools have been found to be major causes for the low attainment of competencies among pupils, especially in the in rural BSs (Chowa, Masa & Tucker, 2013; Acheampong, 2004)).
According to Tomasevski (2006), child’s mother tongue and the choice of curricula and TLMs continue are important factors that are shaping the recruitment and training of teachers in recent times. Community participation in teacher recruitment ensures that teachers who are closer to the communities and are versed in the local environment, culture and the language of the locality are recruited. This reduces teachers’ absenteeism, increases their acceptance of rural postings and reduces attrition as well as making education more relevant to local needs (UNESCO, 2014).

3.4 Contextualization of Educational Strategies

Lewin (2007), in his study on diversity in convergence, developed a typology on the challenges to expanded access of secondary school education in Sub-Saharan Africa base on the 2005 UNESCO GMR on EFA (refer to table 2). On the basis of context, he identified grouped, ranked Sub-Saharan Africa countries into five. He identified the context of group four countries to include mid-range GER enrolment at primary level, low enrolment at lower secondary and upper secondary levels. He identified high repetition and dropout rates as the causes for the gap in access. He attributed the high rate of attrition to the poor performance of students, unaffordability that hinder retention, a loss of interest and motivation due to lower value place on education among others. These pitfalls have direct link to geographical, economic, and social-cultural terrain in those countries. These include the remoteness of most of the settlements, high incidence of poverty (mostly among the rural folks), high rate of literacy among others. The context of group four countries is different from those in group one in which countries like South Africa and Botswana which were identified to have high enrolment at the primary and secondary level. This context has a direct link to the relatively better socio-economic indicators and relatively urbanised nature of those countries.

Lewin (2007), therefore, posited that given the differences in contexts, specific strategies base on context are needed to universalize access and achieve quality and equity in secondary education. For group four country like Ghana he argued for strategies that seek to: balance progress on universalizing access and completion in education by increasing lower secondary participation; recognize the interactions between primary and secondary expansion, especially, in the supply of teachers; identify sustainable frameworks to provide financial resources and; adopt a differentiated approach to reducing regional, rural-urban and gender disparities are very crucial.
Table 2 Contextual Strategies for expanded access to equitable quality education at Lower secondary education in Sub-Saharan Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Contextual factors</th>
<th>Focus and strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Seychelles, South Africa, Botswana, Mauritius, Swaziland</td>
<td>• High GER 1, high GER 2L and GER 2U</td>
<td>• relatively higher income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• low attrition</td>
<td>• Low population growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• High participation rates at all levels</td>
<td>• High participation rates in education all levels and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Geographical accessibility due domination of urban settlements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>Gambia, Zambia, Kenya, Comoros, Congo, Ghana, Cote d’Ivoire</td>
<td>• Mid-range GER</td>
<td>• Relatively lower income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• GER 1 below 100 with substantial numbers not enrolling or completing primary1.</td>
<td>• Relatively high population growth and large household size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• low GER 2L and GER 2U</td>
<td>• Geographical accessibility problem due to domination of disperse and isolated rural settlements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Mid-range attrition; It reflects low initial enrolment, high repetition and drop-out.</td>
<td>• Rural-urban and North-South inequities in access to quality education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Low participation in secondary education</td>
<td>• Comparably high illiteracy rate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s construction base on Lewin (2007b) typology of challenges for the expansion of secondary education in Sub-Saharan Africa

Therefore, the universal rights-based-strategies for delivering equitable education to marginalised groups especially, the rural folks, must therefore embrace the understanding that difference exists between and within countries. This calls for differentiated and varying strategies in order to maximum outcomes. This therefore, requires policy framework assessment that identifies the contextual causes for the disparities, both at the local and national levels and properly target and reach out to the most marginalised with social safety net programmes (Lewin, 2007; UNESCO, 2010; World Bank, 2004). Lewin (2007), posited further that, although convergence approaches of homogenising the challenges to access to education and their solutions have some advantage in terms of cost, however, they are inadequate in offering sustainable solutions in addressing the gender, class and geographical disparities to access and quality. The differences require that policy makers take into consideration the issue of the reality of diversity of contexts (Lewin, 2007; Kubow & Fossum, 2007) and adapt policies, programmes, curriculum strategies to the conditions of each milieu in accordance to the rights-based approach to education (Akyeanpong, 2005).
3.4.1 Contextualization based on Country Specific Context

The Morocco cash transfer policy, the Republic of Korean teacher policy, the Brazilian redistribution and decentralization reform policy and, the Nigeria flexible timetabling system offer relevant examples on how educational strategies can be contextualized base on the diversity in contexts within a country in order to inject equity in access and quality in BE.

The Case of Morocco Cash Transfer Policy

Prior to the introduction of the CCT programme in Morocco, about 90% of children in rural areas started primary school, but a whopping 40% dropped out before reaching the final year of a six-year primary education as against less than 10% for urban children. The CCT programme was piloted by Morocco’s Ministry of Education in 2009. It mostly targeted poor rural households with CCT so as to addressing the inequity in retention and completion of primary education (Benhassine, et al., 2015).

An experimental study dubbed the Tayssir CCT pilot programme was conducted by Benhassine, et al (2015) to evaluate the impact of the programme. The pilot program consisted of cash payments to parents of primary school age children (6 to 15). The studies took place in the five poorest regions of Morocco (out of sixteen administrative regions) and within those regions, in the poorest rural municipalities (administrative units called “communes”) with high dropout rates at the primary school level. A total of 320 rural primary school sectors (close to 65% of all school sectors in the selected regions) were sampled for the study in those municipalities.

The findings revealed that school’s participation at the end of year 2 increased among all primary-school aged children in the household sample, irrespective of status at baseline (but controlling for schooling status at baseline). Also about 60% of children of beneficiary households were found to be more likely to have attended school during the Tayssir transfers programme than prior to the programme. The dropout rate among pupils enrolled in school at the start of the program in the beneficiary schools in poorest rural areas was about 7.6% lower than the dropout rate (10%) in schools in other relatively poor areas that did not benefit from the programme (Benhassine, et al., 2015). Re-enrolment of those who had dropped out of school before the program almost doubled in the beneficiary schools as compared to the other schools. Also, and the share of students who never enrolled in school fell by nearly 43%.
Furthermore, performance in basic arithmetic test improved, although not significantly (Ibid). The findings also revealed that the segment of the society who benefited the most from CCT programmes were the rural poor children and particularly girls which risk exclusion due to affordability of BE (ibid). However, some challenges also emerged. They include the challenge of setting appropriate targets and conditionalities. The other was some weakness in reaching out and keeping the most vulnerable people who actually need the intervention. Lack of effective targeting may have potentially led to some form of exclusion of the intended beneficiaries. Also, high conditionality and inadequate participation of community level stakeholders in deciding on appropriate conditions may have reduced the effectiveness of transfer programs by discouraging some households to even apply for them (Ibid., 2015).

**The Case of Republic of Korean Teacher Deployment Policy**

By the beginning of the 21st century, Republic of Korean has emerged as one of the best examples in higher achievers in educational outcomes. Her egalitarian approach to education which seeks to foster gender and class equality accounts for the success. However, international assessment identified some level of geographical, class and gender gap in her educational outcomes (Martin, Choe, Kim, & Kwak, under review; Kang & Hong, 2008).

The Korean government adopted teacher deployment strategy to tackle these disparities. Firstly, recruitment of teachers was decentralised with higher priority given to rural areas, such that the local areas were empowered to hire best teachers first. This increased the acceptability of postings and the supply of quality teachers in disadvantaged areas. Teachers in rural schools were given additional incentives such as special stipend, relatively small class size, lesser teaching time and the opportunity to choose their next school after serving more than one year in rural and difficult areas, as well as opportunity for faster promotion. Also, a strategy of rotation of teachers every five years within a given province ensured equitable re-distribution of quality of teachers (Kang & Hong, 2008). Now about 77% of teachers in the rural areas have minimum qualification of bachelor’s degree, compared with only 30% in urban schools. Also 45% of the teachers in the rural schools have more than 20 years of teaching experience as against 30% for urban teachers (UNECO, 2014).

**The Case of Brazilian Redistribution and Decentralisation Reforms Policy**

Brazil epitomises vast social, cultural, economic and geographical diversity. It’s over 170 million mix -multi-racial and ethnic population draws from native America, Africa, and Asian
and European roots. Income disparities are very huge between regions in the south and that of
the north, urban and rural areas within individual regions and between white and blacks. The
causes for the inequality are attributed to inequality in wages and education (Work Bank,
2004).

In the mid-90s, the government adopted a policy reform in education to tackle the wide spread
inequality. The major drivers of the reform were redistribution of income through equity in
national spending, and relevance through decentralisation. The Fund for Primary Education
Administration and Development (FPEAD) was introduced to enhance equity in access and
quality of primary education (UNESCO, 2010). The fund guaranteed certain cap of spending
per a pupil by complementing federal allocations and state spending. Rural school were given
priority over urban schools and pupils from highly marginalised indigenous families were
given greater weight. The programme also made funds available for teachers in poor rural
schools, particularly in the northern part, to upgrade their professional status (Bruns, Evans &
Luque, 2012).

The delivery of BE was decentralised through a-three tier system- federal, state, and
municipal levels, with each having some administrative oversight. Authority over compulsory
primary education is primarily in the hands of municipalities (local government units) and
states. Decision making and standards governing primary education are determined by the
municipalities, but with approval from the national and state standards setting bodies. In
order to promote diversity, bilingual intercultural education has been developed within the
local curriculum. State and communities have the power to take initiatives to adapt the
national curriculum to cater to local learning needs in agrarian rural areas (Shin, Iyengar &
Bajaj, 2013).

The impact of the reforms has been remarkable. The average school attendance among
children from the poorest 20%, mostly rural households which was just four years in the mid-
90s has risen to about eight years by 2013 (UNESCO, 2015a). Also the reforms have
increased equity between the south and the north, the rural and urban as well as among the
different races in the country. For example, the average enrolment rate has increased by 61%
in North-East region and by 32% in the North regions for the period between 1997 and 2003
(UNESCO, 2010). As regards to quality, the reform led to enhancement in teacher quality and
quantity, especially those in rural areas. A deliberate programme to upgrade rural teachers led
to the elimination of nonprofessional teachers. By 2002, almost every teacher had the
minimum training requirement for teachers in the country. It also led to adequate supply of qualified teachers to under-served area. The teaching work forced increased by one-fifth between 1997 and 2002 (UNESCO, 2010; 2014). The decentralisation in the decision making including curricula also enhanced relevance of education at the local levels (Shin, Iyengar & Bajaj, 2013).

The Case of Bihar State in Indian Bicycle for Girls Programme

In India, there was a very big problem of low enrolment and attendance to lower and upper secondary school among girls due to the problem of geographical inaccessibility and some social-cultural practices which tend to encourage early marriage (Muralidharan & Prakash, 2013). Most of the rural areas although have primary schools, they did not have lower secondary and senior secondary schools which were most often found in relatively urban core areas so as to serve adjoining villages. Also, India has one of the largest numbers of child marriage in the world (The Hindu, 2014). According to current UNICEF statistics about 30% of the female adolescent population were engaged in marriage between by 2012. The average rural Indian girl is likely to be married around the age of completing secondary education due to the high social valued placed on marriage (Muralidharan & Prakash, 2013).

Therefore, in her quest to boost girls’ re-enrolment, attendance and completion to secondary school, the government of India introduced the ‘bicycle for girls’ program' which was piloted in the Bihar state of India in 2006. The programme had a two edge strategies of overcome geographical distance and uprooting socio-cultural impediment to girls’ education. The program provided all girls who enrolled in grade 9 with funds to buy a bicycle to make it easier to access schools. The programme therefore has a feature of ‘conditional kind transfer' as it had demand (which is the enrolment conditionality) and supply-side interventions (which is reducing the time, distance, and safety and the cost of attending school) (Muralidharan & Prakash, 2013).

Muralidharan & Prakash (2013), conducted a study to evaluate the impact of the programme in the Bihar State, one of the poorest and rural states which also had the lowest mean levels of education in India. Whereas over 95% of villages in the State have a primary school, access to secondary schools is considerably more limited as the probability of 14 and 15 year olds being enrolled in school steadily declines as the distance to the nearest secondary school increases (Muralidharan & Prakash, 2013). The study used data from a large representative
household survey, and it employed a triple difference approach of using boys and the neighbouring state of Jharkhand as comparison groups. The findings from the studies revealed that the programme increased enrolment and the general attendance level of students. The increases in enrolment mostly took place in villages where the nearest secondary school was further away, suggesting that the mechanism for program impact was the reduction in the time and safety cost of school attendance made possible by the bicycle. It also increased girls’ age-appropriate enrolment in secondary school by 30% and further reduced the gender gap in age-appropriate secondary school enrolment by 40% (Ibid).

The case of Nigeria Flexible Timetabling System

In Nigeria, gendered socio-cultural practices, especially related to religion and lifestyle have been identified to have very negative effect on participation in elementary schooling (Humphes & Crawfurd, 2014). As regards religion and education, parents in Islamic dominated northern Nigeria prefer that their children attend Qur’anic schooling - Almajira to formal schooling, thereby denying some children of having formal education. In order to overcome this challenge, the strategy of a flexible school time table planning was adopted. This flexibility enabled pupils to attend formal basic school just after Qur’anic school in the mornings. This has increased the number of children enrolling in formal basic schooling alongside the Almajira (Humphes & Crawfurd, 2014).

3.5 The impact of Basic Education Strategies in Ghana

Ghana BE policy strategies are underpinned by the principle of redistribution of social cost of education in favour of marginalised groups. It is oriented towards bridging the north-south, gender, and poor-rich divide in access to good quality education (World Bank, 2011; GOG, 2003; 2010). A reviewed of educational policy documents in Ghana by Ankomah, Koomson, Bosu & Oduro (2005), revealed that Ghana’s policy on education tend to focus on three main themes:

- Improving access and equity through universal primary education, promotion of girls’ and early childhood education as well as community participation.
- Improving quality through efficient curriculum; teachers’ education, quality assessment mechanisms and personal development and
improving efficiency in educational management through decentralisation, sustainability in funding, forming stronger partnership among stakeholders

This sub-section therefore peruses the recent educational policy strategies on BE in Ghana so and the extent to which they have addressed the issues of access and quality as well as equity issues embedded in them.

3.5.1 The fCUBE and Abolition of fees

In its early stage the fCUBE programme focused more on infrastructure expansion to increase the availability of schools. By the year 2000 many communities in Ghana had at least primary schools. However, universal access was not achieved due to the issue of affordability. Therefore, from the 2000s the focus shifted to increasing access through affordability (Poku, Aawaar, & Worae, 2013). The fCUBE abolished tuition fees by instituting a cost-sharing arrangement where government took responsibility of tuition and parents were expected to bear limited expenses on non-tuition fees (Adamu-Issah, Elden, Forson & Schrofer, 2007). Although the abolition of fees led to increase in the GER in primary level from 77% to 84% between 1996 and 2003 (GoG, 2003), the overall impact on access was derailed by the inability of most parents, in fulfilling their part of the bargain. The other levies that were charged on parents with approval from DEOs such as those for school repairs, cultural and sporting activities among others continued to be major blockages to access, especially in rural, northern and urban slums areas of Ghana (Little, 2010). About 40% of children between age 6 and 11 years remained out of school by 2003 (Adamu-Issah, et al, 2007). Therefore the government introduced the Capitation Grant Policy which have a resemblance of cash transfer programme in the 2005/2006 academic year to further abolished most of the other forms of levies so as to achieve universal access as envisaged by the fCUBE and also in consistent with the MDG (goal 2) and EFA (goal 2).

Studies have shown that the impact of the capitation grant on enrolment. The overall increase in enrolment for BE was 16.7% more in the 2005/06 school year compared to the 2004/05 (Osei, Ouwusu, & Afutu-Kotey, 2009) and since then there has been sustained increase in enrolment. This has propelled Ghana into achieving the EFA goal on access and gender parity at the primary school level by 2015. However, its overall impact on BE, especially JHS level has not been encouraging as the retention rate keeps dwindling towards the apex.
In 2009, the Institute of Statistical Social and Economic (ISSER) conducted a quantitative documentary study to assess the effect of the capitation Grant Policy in Ghana on key educational outcomes. The findings revealed that the capitation grant has not made much significant impact on gross enrolment at the JHS level, the pass rate in the BECE and the gap in examination performance between boys and girls as well as urban and rural JHSs (Osei, et al., 2009). The study identified that the amount (USD 3.00 as at 2009) of grant per pupils was grossly insufficient. Also, others such as increased demands for additional classrooms, teachers, textbooks and other TLMs, inadequate level of transparency at the school level, low level of community participation among others were also identified as the causes for the rather low impact of the programme (ibid). The study concluded that the capitation grant alone is insufficient to deliver the necessary outcomes in BE as enshrined in the fCUBE and the ESP. It alluded to the fact that educational policy in Ghana needs to take a holistic view base on the peculiar context and needs of each milieu so as to achieve the desired outcomes (Ibid).

With regard to how the fCUBE contributed in addressing the issue of equity, in 1996, the Technical sub-committees on access under the fCUBE set the following objectives on equity in access;

- to achieve gender parity in admissions at the first grade of primary school by 2000 and to equalize completion at sixth and seventh grade by 2005.

- given the historically lower levels of access in rural and Northern Ghana, it committed to universalising access to Grade 1 in the North by 2000 and to achieve a 93% completion rate at Grade 6 in Northern and rural schools by 2005.

In furtherance of the above, Girls’ Education Unit was set up in 1997 and considerable financial investments were made, largely by external agencies. The programme involved a range of activities from advocacy and community sensitisation to scholarship schemes for girls. Girls club were formed to advocate for girls’ education as well as educate girls on reproductive health issues. Also, micro-credit schemes were established for rural women so as to boost household support to education. Also, community mobilisation activities were pursued to initiate self-help project to support education in the localities, for example, this

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included providing communal labour for the construction of schools (Osei, et al, 2009; Adamu-Issah et.al 2007).

A joint UNICEF and UNESCO commissioned study by Adamu-Issah et.al (2007) identified the impact of the programme on equity to be very positive. Although every region in Ghana experiences a rise in enrolment, however disadvantaged areas including the three northern regions which are among the four most deprived regions in Ghana; and the rural areas experienced the largest increase (MoESS, 2006; Adamu-Issah et.al, 2007). Furthermore, GER for girls at the primary level increased from 83% to 89% with gender parity of 0.93 to 0.95 between 2003 and 2006 (ibid). Girls’ enrolment appreciated slightly more than that of boys, that is, 18% as against 15%. However, due to the insufficient inflows of funding the gains seem to be plummeting.

### 3.5.2 Ghana School Feeding Programme

Ghana introduced SFP in 2005 under New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD) “Home Grown” concept under Dutch government support. The SFP apart from the health value is intended to boost access, attendance and retention by capturing and maintaining excluded pupils in primary school (GoG, 2007). The programme expanded from an initial number of 69,000 beneficiary students in 2005 to 697,496 by the end of the first phase of the programme in 2010 (Lynch, 2013).

Lynch (2013), Aliu & Sakara (2014) conducted a study to assess the impact of the SFP. Their findings revealed positive effect of the programme on access. It increased the enrolment and attendance rates and reduced the dropout rates at the primary level in all the districts of Ghana. However, they identified the issues of improper targeting and misplaced priority as regards to the selection of beneficiary schools as major weakness in the implementation of the programme. For example, Aliu & Sakara (2014) discovered that due to political expediency areas which are relatively better off are sometime included for possible electoral gains to the neglect of poorer areas which actually need the programme the most. They also identified the issue of lack of community involvement in the management of the programme as another bottleneck. Also, due to funding gap as a result of withdrawal of the Dutch government support in 2011 and the inability of the government of Ghana to adequately fund the programme from internal resources the quality of food served is rather low. The lack of funds is also threatening the sustainability of the programme (Aliu & Sakara (2014).
With regard to SFP and equity, the programme made a bold attempt in addressing the issue of equity among the different socio-economic groups in Ghana. It was intended to basically target poor communities, mostly, rural areas and some urban slums areas where the incidence of poverty is very high (Aliu & Sakara, 2014; Lynch, 2013). According to MoE, (2013), the SFP increased enrolment and attendance at KG and primary levels in deprived rural districts. For example, the deprived districts recorded higher net enrolment ratio for primary school level in the 2011/12 academic year than that of the national level, that is, 85 % as against 81%. Also, gender disparity has almost been surpassed at the KG level, representing a higher proportion for girls’ enrolment than boys for the 4 to 5-year-old age group by 2013 (MoE, 2013). Notwithstanding, the largest share of out of school children and the widest gender gap in completion rates are still found in the rural areas of Ghana.

3.5.3 Early Childhood Development Policy

The 2004 Anamuah Mensah Educational Review Committee Report which culminated into the GoG White Paper on Education Reform identified that one of the problems that militate against equity, retention and completion of BE, particular in the rural Ghana, is the issue of over-age children as a result of late entry into school (MoESS, 2005). Therefore, a bold attempt was made to use pre-school education as a conduit to achieve universal access to equitable quality BE consistent with the MDG2 and EFA goal 1. A two -year kindergarten (KG) education was introduced into the formal stream of the (fCUBE) under the National Early Childhood Development (ECD) policy in line with the Dakar 2000 EFA framework of action on expanding and improve early childhood care and development (ECCD) (Adamu-Issah, et al, 2007). According to the policy every primary school in Ghana is to be attached with a KG and teachers were to be trained in ECCD (MoESS, 2005).

According to the Ghana education sector performance review report (2013), the strategy is yielding some positive results. The numbers of KGs as well as the enrolments levels have increased tremendously. For example, between 2008 and 2013 the number of KGs increased by 2% (MoE, 2013). Also, the highest increase in enrolment at the basic level since 2005 has been recorded at the KG level. It increased from 93% in 2008 to about 99 % in 2013 as compare to 81% and 82% for the JHS for the same period. As regards to equity, gender parity has been almost surpassed at the KG level, representing a higher proportion of girls than boys in school for 4- 5-year-old age group (MoE, 2013). Also KG education and its complementary
programmes such as the SFP have enhanced rural-urban equity. For example, deprived district in Ghana recorded higher net enrolment ratio for KG in the 2012/13 academic year than that of the national level, that is, 75.6% as against 73.3 (MoE, 2013). However, many primary schools, especially those in rural areas, are yet to be attached with KGs. Also, attendance seems to be lower in rural BSs than urban BSs due to the problem of inaccessibility attributed to the long distance between pupils and the schools (MoE, 2010; 2013).

3.5.4 Mother Tongue Policy for KG and Lower Primary Level

The 2004 Anamuah Mensah Educational Review Committee Report also prescribed that the medium of instruction for the KG level up to grade 3 should be the child’s mother – tongue complimented with English. Hence the National Literacy Accelerated Programme (NALAP) was rolled out. It seeks to imbibe in the child the love for his or her local language and the ability to communicate in it effectively as the first step towards the acquisition of a second language (MoE, 2013). According to the policy, teacher trainees have to specialise in at least one Ghanaian language so as to ensure the realisation of the objectives of the programme (Owu-Ewie, 2006). However, the impact of the policy has been minimal due to some major bottlenecks (Owu-Ewie, 2006; MoE, 2013). One of which is that only 9 out of the 46 languages in Ghana are officially written languages. Hence many pupils have to learn at least a language that shares some resemblance to their mother tongue. This is defeating the very essence of the policy (Owu-Ewie, 2006). Also, the issue of centralisation in the recruitment of teachers does not ensure staffing the schools with teachers who are competent in the language of the communities they are posted into.

3.5.5 Teacher Deployment Strategy in Ghana

Several studies including Agyemman (1993); Amedahe, Estasy & Edjah (2004) and Etsey (2005) in Ghana have, revealed that the poor quality of BE in Ghana is attributed partly to the lack of adequate professional teachers, especially in rural BSs. Pupil- trained teacher ratio in rural and underserved district is high while there are surplus of teachers in some urban areas due to refusal of rural postings (GoG, 2006). In pursuance of EFA goal 6, an effort was made in 2005 to address the rural deficit in supply of teachers through the decentralisation policy dubbed District Sponsorship Scheme (Cobbold, 2006). Under the arrangement, rural deprived DAs are enjoined to select and sponsor teacher trainee students so that the MoE could bond
them to serve for at least five years in the sponsor districts after their studies (Cobbold, 2006). However, due to the difficulties of most of the deprived DAs in fulfilling their financial obligations to these students, they refused postings to such districts upon completion (Cobbold, 2006).

3.5.6 Quality Assurance and Supervision

Several studies including Neagley and Evans (1970) have revealed that effective supervision is a catalyst for quality teaching and learning in the study environment. Studies by Ankomah et. al. (2005) and Estasy (2005) revealed that quality is generally low in BSs in Ghana, but more particularly, lower in rural and public schools than in urban and private schools. They identified the low level of supervision in rural and also mostly in public schools for the gap. In order to address this problem and in pursuance of EFA goal 6, in 2008 an act of Parliament (Act 778) established the Ghana Inspectorate Board- an agency under ministry of Education, but independent of Ghana Education Service - to oversee and undertake independent external evaluation of quality assurance in pre-tertiary institutions in Ghana. However, since its inception its impact is yet to be felt on a national scale as it is yet to fully decentralise to cover all the districts in Ghana (MoE, 2013).

In summary, this chapters conceives universal access to equitable quality BE in contemporary global policy discourse as human rights issue. International treaties seek to oblige national governments and rally support from stakeholders toward the attainment of accessible equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities. Global strategies on equitable accessible quality BE seek to make education more relevant whilst at the same time eliminate the obstacles to availability, accessibility and affordability to school by hooking the most excluded groups to the educational process with safety net programmes. The literature on Ghana’s educational policy strategies toward her free compulsory universal quality BE drive mimic the gobal picture. They are underpinned by the principle of redistribution of social cost of education in favour of marginalised groups. The next chapter delves into the methodology that was employed by this study as informed by the theory and literature.
4 Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology adopted by this study as informed by the literature and the theoretical framework toward the achievement of the stated objective. It explains the what, how and why regarding the research strategy and design; the sampling of site and participants; data collection and tools, analysis and presentation of the results. It also explains the unit and level of comparisons as well as quality assurance issues such as liability, validity and ethics.

4.1 Research Strategy and Design

This dissertation uses quantitative research approach as there is emphasis on quantification in the collection, analysis and presentation of data. It also entails a deductive approach to the relationship between theory and research. This is due to the fact that the study proceeded on clear cut priorily crafted research questions and analytical framework (Brayman, 2012). The choice of the quantitative approach of this study is due to the fact that the target population and the sample size were relatively large as compare to most qualitative studies. Also, it sought to measure relatively good number of definitive concepts and indicators from the perspective of a larger population than what pertains in most qualitative studies which seek to give in-depth description of one or two sensitizing concepts from the view point of a smaller population (Ibid). Hence quantitative approach was the best option to compress large data sets that were collected into meaningful measurable and comparable concepts as this is difficult in qualitative approach. Also, unlike qualitative studies where generalisation of findings is very limited, the choice of this approach was to facilitate generalisations of findings due to the relatively large population sample (Ibid).

The study also employed descriptive survey design complemented by secondary sources of data. Hutchinson (2004), noted that information gathered from surveys is typically used either for purely descriptive purposes or for examining relationships between variables. The study uses the one-shot survey design type as the data was collected from the population once. This type of design has been found to be very potent method of collecting data from relatively large population at a short possible time (Brayman, 2012). It also facilitates correlational description of the concept as well as making generalisations (Hutchinson, 2004; Brayman,
This simple, common form of survey was chosen based on the limited resources and time constraints.

4.2 Research Setting

This study was done in the Asunafo North Municipality (ANM), one of the 216 district/municipal and metropolitan decentralized administrative areas in Ghana. ANM lies between latitudes 6°27’N and 7°00’N and longitudes 2°52’W and is located in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. Its total land size is 1412.07km2 with about 578.6 km2 covered by forest reserves (GSS, 2014). The large tract of the forest reserve contributes to the problem of inaccessibility to BE as many villages and hamlets that are scattered around the reserve which do not have BSs.

The 2010 Ghana Population and Housing Census (PHC) perked its population at 122,658 with a growth rate of 2.6%. This is made up of about 51% female and 49%. The ANM has 52,193 representing 47.1 % of her population being children under 15 years. Out of this figure the majority 64% are in the rural areas (GSS, 2014). The implication of this on BE is an increasing demand for access due to high population growth. ANM has about 62% of its population living in the rural areas. This is higher than the national figure of 56 %( ibid). There are only two main urban settlements in the district, with the remaining being rural. The distribution of housing stock and the number of households are 30% and 40% respectively for urban as against 70% and 60% for the rural areas (ibid). The implication of this on BE is that the large number of children who live in the villages and hamlets (on the farm settlements) have to walk several hours to the nearby core villages for school. The rural nature of the ANM is very significance to the problem under study and the rural lens perspective in which this study is also viewed.

As regard to the economic outlook of the ANM, about 59% of its total household income is from agricultural with the remaining coming from service and industry (GSS, 2014). Apart from few cash crop farmers, especially, cocoa owners, the majority who are mostly peasant food crop farmers and caretakers of cocoa farms are among the poorest in the district. Agriculture is mostly practice as a way of life rather than gainful economic activity. The dependent ratio in the district is quite high with about 12 persons depending on 5 working
people. The poverty rate is therefore high (Ibid). The implication of this is that the extent to which households’ income can support access to quality BE is quite low.

With regard to education, there are 328 BSs in the ANM clustered in eleven BE circuits. Three of the circuits are predominantly urban and the rest are predominantly rural. Most of the BSs, especially, JHS are located in relatively bigger villages and towns. This implies that several pupils from the remote rural areas have to either relocate to the bigger villages and towns or commute, mostly on foot to these centres for school. There are 11,575 pupils in the ANM out of which 48% are girls and 52% boys (GSS, 2014).

4.3 Sampling of Site and Participants

Stratified sampling method was used to divide the 216 districts/municipal and metropolitan administrative areas in Ghana into rural and urban\textsuperscript{4} using the Ghana’s 2010 Population and Housing Census (PHC) report definition for rural settlement. Stratified sampling method was further used to divide the rural districts in Ghana into two using the Ministry of Education (MoE) classification of districts in Ghana into deprived and non-deprived\textsuperscript{5} base on some benchmark indicators on access and quality. Simple random sampling was then used to select one district, from the rural-deprived district cohort (refer to fig 3). The choice of selecting a rural-deprived district for this study was informed by the expectation that it will give a better picture of the problem under investigation. Also, notwithstanding the use of stratified sampling method for selecting a rural and derived it was still possible to generalise the findings to all rural districts in Ghana. Also, in order to capture the rural-urban dichotomy in the study district, cluster sampling was further used to group the 11 BE circuits in the ANM into two, that is, rural and urban based on predominant type of settlement. The rural circuits were eight and the urban circuits were three. Also, in order to take care of the geographical spread of the communities and therefore, the schools in the study District, the rural circuits were further zoomed into five and the remaining three urban circuits were grouped under one

\textsuperscript{4} Communities with a population of less than 5000 are classified as rural in Ghana. The 2010 PHC indicates that 170 out of the 216 districts/municipal and metropolitan administrative areas in Ghana are predominantly rural.

\textsuperscript{5} The MoE also classifies districts in Ghana into deprived and non-deprived using the following indicators: retention in primary education (enrolment in P6/enrolment in P1 based on all schools); retention in the basic cycle (enrolment in JHS3/enrolment in P1 based on all schools); share of girls enrolled in P6 (all schools); share of girls enrolled in JHS3 (all schools); pass rate in BECE English and; the share of trained teachers in the public primary schools. Base on these indicators, 57 out of the 216 districts in Ghana are classified as very deprived by the MoE as they have the lowest share of all the above indicators as compare the relatively non-deprived districts (MoE, 2013).
zone- zone six (refer to Appendix 6). Simple random sampling was then used to select five BSs from each of the six zones. In all, 30 BSs, 25 rural and 5 urbans were included in this study. The cluster sampling of rural and urban BSs ensured that the rural BSs dominate the study. This was informed by the rural lens perspective in which the study is also viewed.

The stratified sampling of the 216 districts in Ghana into rural-urban and deprived and none deprived couple with the simple random selection of the study district and the schools were to facilitate generalisation of the findings to the entire schools in the study District well as in rural Ghana. Also, the choice of multiple sampling methods in this single study was to ensure representativeness of the sample size so as to impact positively on the generalisation of the findings (Brayman, 2012).

Also, in order to facilitate a comparison and get a better picture on the extent of rural-urban dichotomy in access and quality in Ghana, secondary data on access and quality were collected from 10 BSs (5 rural and 5 urban). These 10 BSs were selected from the already selected 30 schools. Secondary data were collected on all the 5 urban BSs in zone six. The other 5 were also randomly selected from the 25 already selected rural BSs (refer to fig 3).

The target population for the study were teachers and head teachers (principals) in the selected BSs in the ANM. However, the accessible population on which questionnaires were administered were the current teachers and head teachers from the 30 selected BSs. Incidental sampling (based on first contact and the willingness of participant) was used to select 100 teachers. Four were targeted from each of the selected BSs. Also, purposive and incidental sampling techniques were combined to select 20 head teachers from the 30 selected BSs. The use of incidental sampling technique for the selection of respondents was convenient to the researcher as it saved time given the number of schools that the researcher had to cover and the wide geographical spread of those schools. It was also convenient to the respondents as it prevented interference with their contact hours. The use of purposive sampling in selecting the head teachers was also informed by the expectation that they are in position to give germane and independent information on certain key issues, especially, those that concerns teachers’ professionalism and attitudes towards their work.

In all, a sample size of 120 respondents (100 teachers and 20 head teachers) was included in this survey. The choice of this sample size was informed by the need to draw a balance between budget and time on one hand, whilst at the same time not compromising on the
representativeness of the sample population. This facilitated the generalisation of the findings to the entire ANM, all rural districts in Ghana and entire Ghana. The choice of current teachers as participants for this study is informed by the fact that they are most of the time a direct subject and object of government educational policies and strategies of the day. Also, they occupy unique position as liaison officers between policy makers at the national and district levels, the community and the pupils. More importantly, they have a rich understanding of government’s educational policies of the day coupled with the fact that they might have some fair knowledge of the specific geographical, socio-economic and the cultural contexts of the communities in which they are at post. Hence, they were better placed to speak to the problem under investigation.

The characteristics of the participants relevant to this study as captured in table 3 show that, 63% males and 37% females participated in this survey. Although the numbers of female were less than that of males, their representation in this study as compare to other similar studies is fairly high. Also, 60% of the participants have at most 5 years of teaching experience against as 40% with more than 5 years. In addition, 62% were untrained (often refer to as pupils’ teachers). They were mostly senior secondary school leavers used as stop-gap teachers in area where there is acute supply of teachers. Also 75% of the participants have lived most of their lives in rural Ghana. This is also significant to the rural lens perspective in which this study is also viewed.

Table 3 Relevant Characteristics of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex of respondents</th>
<th>Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Professional qualifications</th>
<th>Milieu participants have lived most</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Years in teaching</td>
<td>percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>5 years and less</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>6 years and more</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Primary data were collected from all the 30 selected BSs, that is, 25 rural and 5 urban.
Secondary data were collected from all the five selected urban Basic schools and 5 from the 25 rural basic schools.

**Figure 3:** Sampling of Site and Participants (Author’s Construction)

### 4.4 Data Collection and Analysis

Questionnaire was the main research instrument for the collection of the primary data. In all, two different sets of questionnaires were designed and administered. One set for teachers and another set for the head teachers (principals). In all, 150 questionnaires were issued out to an originally targeted 150 respondents, but 100 were retrieved and used for the analysis. The teachers’ questionnaire was made of 31 questions and that of the head teachers was made up of 30 questions. The questionnaires elicited responses as regard the extent of rural-urban
equity in access and quality, government policies and strategies for addressing the inequities, the challenges and specific contexts that exacerbate the inequities. It also allowed respondents to identify policies, programmes and strategies that in their views can enhance access and quality and bridge the rural-urban gap in the Ghana. Given the enlighten nature of the respondents, the questionnaires were self-administered. This option was chosen due to the fact that it is quicker and it also removes any interviewer effect and above all it was convenient for respondents given their tight schedule. This type of instrument has been used in several studies (Smith and McVie, 2003: 183 in Brayman, 2012) and its comparative advantage lies in that fact that its flexibility helps researcher to amass large amount of data from a relatively large population at shorter time.

In addition, secondary data sources on indicators for access and quality such enrolments, drop-outs, attendance, as well as, quantity, quality and distribution of teachers, and on other inputs were collected from DEO as well as ten out of the thirty selected BSs. Two separate guides were designed for the collection of secondary data (refer to appendices 8.4 and 8.5) One for the DEO and one for the 10 selected BSs. Also, data on BE as regards access, quality and equity as captured in national level educational review reports and policy documents and educational and national census reports were also relied upon. They include:

- Ghana Living Standard Survey Reports, 2014 (GLSS 6)
- The Education Strategic Plan (ESP) covering 2003-2015 & 2010-2020
- Ghana’s Education Performance Sector Report(EPSR), 2010 and 2013

The comparative analyses of the data between rural and urban milieus of Ghana also made it possible to generalise some of the findings to entire Ghana. Also, the combination of primary and secondary data sources helped in enriching the presentation and discussion on the topic. They also facilitated the necessary comparisons of what pertains in the rural and the urban areas. The collected data were codified by assigning consistent numbers to the qualitative data both before and after data gathering. This facilitated the entering of nominal and ordinal data into the computer software- SPSS. The entered data were edited manually. The SPSS and excel were used to run the computations and the results were presented in the form of frequency tables, charts, and graphs. Also some of the qualitative data gathered through the open-ended questions were summarized and ranked.
The measurements of variables were done at multiple levels: parametric statistics for interval/ratio-level measurements and non-parametric statistics for nominal/ordinal-level measurements. This ensured high validity (Brayman, 2012). Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed. Whereas the descriptive statistics helped in describing the problem, inferential statistics help in making inferences. These also facilitated comparisons of data.

The summarised data that were displayed in the form of frequency tables, charts, graphs, and rankings were interpreted through highlighting the majority views as well as minority views in percentage wise and rankings. Interpretation and discussion were done by synchronising the findings from the theories and the literature with the findings from the results of the analysed data. The general findings emerge from the data analysis and interpretation were summarised and recommendations offered as to the way forward.

### 4.5 Levels and Units of Comparison

Firstly, educational policy strategies toward equitable accessible quality BE at the global level were compared with that of the developing countries and Ghana. Secondly, the level of access and quality in BE between rural and urban milieu were compared at both the global and the national and study District level to see extent of inequities. Also, existing geographical, social, economic and cultural factors that favour or hinder access, quality and equity were examined from the rural-urban contexts. Also comparison of relevant strategies that yield sustainable outcomes base on the identified specific rural context in Ghana and the ANM were also compared with urban Ghana. Units of comparison as regard to educational strategies on access in terms of availability, accessibility (proximity), and affordability to BE were compared based on specific contextual factors of the ANM and rural Ghana on one hand as against the generalisation of strategies at the national level. Also, those on quality such as strategies that enhance quality through availability of facilities and TLMs, quality and quantity of teachers; teachers’ motivation and professional development, schools and learning environment, teachers’ work attitude and output, as well as pupils’ outputs were also compare from the specific context of ANM and rural Ghana in general as against the situation at the national level.
4.6 Validity and Reliability

Validity in scientific research encompasses the overall procedures including randomization of the sample groups and appropriate controls of disaggregation of variables that ensure that the results obtained from scientific study meet all the requirements of the scientific research method (Brayman, 2012). There are two types: internality and external validity. Internal validity ensures that the research design is structured in line with the scientific method. It is very crucial in quantitative research as it ensure that the researcher follows the principle of cause and effect, that is, the causal effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable (Brayman, 2012; Hutchinson, 2004). In this study it is operationally employed to ascertain the effects that contextual geographical, economic and socio-cultural factors as well as GoG policy strategies pose on equity in access and quality in BE.

External validity on the other hand ensures that the results from the study can be generalized. In this study, scientific sampling procedures were followed to select a representative site and participants. The use of self-administered questionnaires ensured gathering of unbiased data as it removed any possible interviewer effect. Also a combination multiple levels of sampling methods and statistical measurements ensured statistical integrity of the data analyses. All these helped to maintain high level of consistency in the study which made the generalisation of the findings to all districts in Ghana that are predominantly rural possible and credible.

In Social Science research, reliability is mostly used in relation to how consistent the measures that are devised for social concepts are (Brayman, 2012). Reliability is very important in quantitative research where the stability in measurement of variables is crucial for credible and consistent results. This study therefore ensured that there is consistency in concepts (of access, quality, equity and context) and their associated variables that were disaggregated to measure them (Ibid, 2012). In order to achieve this, variables that accurately measure the construct and the concepts of interest in the study were carefully selected based on literature and theoretical reviews. This is evident in the clear cut operational definitions of the concepts. Also, the combination of primary and secondary data, where secondary data were mostly used as a buffer for the primary data and in comparative terms, helped to ensure consistency of the results.
4.7 Ethical Considerations

Social Science research, although it is not conducted in a restrictive laboratory like the natural sciences and also deals with human behavior which are highly unpredictable, yet have to follow systematic procedure in achieving credible and verifiable results (Hutchinson, 2004). Hence social researcher must always consider ethical issues that are likely to emerge in the course of a study. Therefore the following ethical issues were considered. Official permission was sought from the DEO before entry into the schools. In the schools, official permissions were sought from the head teachers before engaging the teachers. Also, participants were made to understand the purpose of the study and consented to take part. They were made to understand that the information they will give would be treated confidential. The identity of the schools and participants were kept anonymous at all phases of the study. Also, the researcher after a careful consideration of the schedule of the selected BSs chose appropriate time that minimized any possible interference with the contact hours. Lastly, the true information given by respondents were presented and interpreted.

4.8 Limitations and Delimitations

The study sought to report the views of professionals who have deep understanding and appreciation of the problem understudy. But, it turn out that the majority of the participants were non-professional and less experienced teachers. This appears to have limited the in-depth knowledge emerged from the findings. However, this was compensated by the fact that these teachers mostly come from the catchment area of the schools as they are recruited by the DEO. Hence, they have adequate knowledge about the context of the communities in which they are teaching. Also, studying only 30 schools out of a total number of 320 and including 120 teachers out of possible number of 1,310 may have not produce ideal results as compare to a case where all the schools and the population were to be studied. Hence, all other things being equal, the statistical precision and the external validity of this study should have been enhance if time and resources had permitted the inclusion of more schools and participants. However, the possible adverse impact of that was reduced by adopting scientific and well tested methods of sampling for the selection of site and participants. Furthermore, the inclusion of stratified and cluster sampling methods at some stages to basically select a rural - deprived district and rural communities for this study may have limited the holistic generalisation of the findings to all district/municipality and metropolitan assemblies in
Ghana that are predominantly urban. However, the in-depth comparison between rural and urban Ghana especially, with the help of secondary data made it is possible to generalise the findings to the entire country as regards to the BE policy making and implementation.

In summing up this chapter, this study adopted quantitative approach to research. It employed one short descriptive survey design. Stratified, cluster, purposive and simple random sampling were combined to select the site and participants. A sample size of 120 respondents was used by study. Questionnaire was the main research instrument for the collection of the primary data complemented with secondary data sources. The data analysis was done with the help of the SPSS and excel. Variables were measured at multiple levels. The results were presented in the form of frequency tables, charts, and graphs, as well as rankings some results from open ended questions. The next chapter therefore presents the results from the data analysis.
5 Findings

The principal objective of this study was to assess the extent of and the factors for the rural–urban inequities in access and quality in BE in Ghana. This is to identify relevant strategies and how they could be implemented in order to enhance access and quality and also inject rural–urban equity in BE. The specific research questions were: What is the current state of BE in Ghana after fifteen years of pursuing deliberate strategies toward achieving the EFA and the MDG2 goals? And in what ways can education strategies be contextualised and executed to bridge the rural–urban gap in access and quality in BE towards achieving the targets of SDG (4)?

In order to answer these questions, both primary and secondary data were amassed. The primary data were collected through questionnaires from teachers and head teachers (principals) from 30 selected BSs (25 rural and 5 urban) across the ANM of Ghana. Two sets of questionnaires, one for teachers and another for head teachers were administered. Both sets included closed and open-ended questions. A total of 120 completed questionnaires - 100 from teachers and 20 from the head teachers out of a targeted number of 150 were used in the analysis. In addition, two sets of guides were designed to collect relevant secondary data. One set was used to amass secondary data from ten selected BSs made up of five rural and five urban from the already selected 30 BSs. The other set focused on gathering relevant data from the DEO. This was complimented with data from the national level such as the 2010 Ghana PHC report among others. Both primary and secondary data were presented. The results from the secondary data were used as buffer to the results from the primary data. The secondary data also helped in making the necessary comparisons between rural and urban dichotomy as regard the problem. This chapter, therefore, presents the results from the analysis of the data.

5.1 The state of Equitable Accessible Quality Basic Education in Ghana

This section seeks to answer research question one under two main themes: the extent of rural–urban inequities and; how GoG policy strategies have addressed the inequities in BE. It was adequately answered by both primary data from the questionnaire and the secondary data from the 10 BSs on which secondary data were collected and the DEO as well as national level data. The results revealed that there is appreciable level of rural–urban inequities in BE
in Ghana in general and ANM in specific. It was also revealed further that the general impact of GoG strategies toward achieving equitable universal quality BE has been average. This rather average impact is due to some identified loopholes such as weak monitoring and evaluation; inadequate and sustainable funding; weak financial and public administration systems; inadequate community participation; ineffective targeting; inadequate and inequitable distribution of educational resources and personnel, especially trained and female teachers.

5.2 Rural-Urban Inequities in Basic Education in Ghana

In order to assess the current state of BE in Ghana with respect to equitable access to quality BE, the extent of rural-urban inequities in access and quality were investigated from the perspective of teachers, head teachers as well as analysis of secondary data from the field.

5.2.1 Inequities in Access

Teachers’ views on rural-urban inequities in access in Ghana and the ANM were sampled on some specific indicators on access. These include the availability (number) of schools, accessibility (proximity) to school, affordability, and attendance and completion rates. Teachers were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with the perception that rural areas in Ghana and ANM trail the urban areas in access to BE. The general views as summarized on fig 4 indicate that rural Ghana is trailing urban Ghana in access to BE. For example, with respect to availability of schools, the majority representing 82% either agreed or strongly agreed with the assertion. Only 13% representing minority views strongly disagreed or disagreed. Their views on affordability, attendance, completion and transition rates revealed a similar pattern as those on availability of schools. The overall levels of the extent of perceptions of respondents in all the selected indicators on access are ranked as follows: agree (48%), strongly agree (36%), neutral (8%), disagree (5%) and strongly disagree (3%). Hence these indicate that about 84% of respondents affirmed the perception that the rural Ghana trails urban Ghana in access to BE.
The above perceptions were further corroborated by the results from the comparative analysis of the secondary data from the ten BSs (five rural and five urban) on which secondary data were obtained. The average attendance, percentage of drop outs, and average enrolments for the third term of 2014/15 academic year were computed and compared. On attendance, the average attendance for the five selected rural BSs was 44 per a pupil out of the possible 55 days in which schools were opened. This is against 49 per a pupil for the five selected urban BSs. With regard to the dropout rate, 5% was computed for the five rural BSs as against only 0.4% for the urban BSs. The average enrolment for the rural BSs at first grade was averaging 46 per school as against 56 for the urban BSs. However, it must be mentioned that when the enrolment rates are juxtaposed on the population density of the two areas, the gap might be negligible as the urban areas are relatively densely populated. The results of the rural-urban inequities in access as found from the analysis of secondary data in the ten selected BSs are captured in Table 4.
Table 4  Comparative data on Access for five Rural and five Urban BSs in ANM for the 2014/15 academic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Total population</th>
<th>Number of times opened for the 3rd term</th>
<th>Total attendance for third term</th>
<th>Average attendance per pupil</th>
<th>Total number of drops outs</th>
<th>Enrolment at grade 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BS1</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>8200</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS2</td>
<td>168</td>
<td></td>
<td>7343</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS3</td>
<td>169</td>
<td></td>
<td>6958</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS4</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
<td>3184</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS5</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
<td>2857</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>656</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>28542</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Average attendance: 28542÷ 656 = 44  
2. Percentage of attendance: 79%  
3. Percentage of Dropouts: 5%  
4. Average enrolments at Grade 46

Table 5  Comparative Data on Access for ten Selected BSs, entire BSs in AMN and Ghana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>5 Rural BSs</th>
<th>5 Urban BSs</th>
<th>ANM</th>
<th>Entire Ghana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total enrolment at grade 1</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>4287</td>
<td>74,485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average enrolment at grade 1 per school</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Attendance</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop outs rate</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GER</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>114.8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion rate</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>93.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Parity Index (GPI)</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*= data is not required or unavailable

Sources: ANM Education Office, 2015; MoE, 2013

Also, secondary data on access from the ten selected BSs for the 2014/15 were compared to those on the entire ANM and Ghana for 2013/2014 academic years. The results as captured in table 5 also affirm the rural-urban gap in access. For example, the completion rate for the ANM was comparatively lower than that of the national level, that is, 87% as against 93%. The gap is an indication that the dropout rate is very high in the ANM especially in the rural areas. This is evident in the 5% as against only 0.4% drop out rates between the five rural and the five urban BSs. The table also indicates a higher GPI of 0.96 at the national level as compared to 0.94 for ANM. The GPI gap of 0.2 suggests that girls’ enrolment and retention in BS is very low in the ANM as compared to the national level.
5.2.2 Inequities in Quality

The rural-urban inequities as regards quality in BE were also assessed in order to understand the extent of the problem. Some selected indicators such as the availability of adequate facilities; availability and retention of adequate and quality teachers; as well as the availability of adequate TLMs were explored. Here, teachers were asked: to what extent they agree or disagree with the assertion that rural areas trail the urban areas in Ghana and in the ANM with regard to the above selected indicators. The responses as summarised on fig 5 show that with the exception of the availability of TLMs, the majority (about 59%) of the respondents at least agree that the rural Ghana trail the urban Ghana in the quality of BE. The aggregate levels of perceptions on all the indicators are ranked as follows: agree (34%), strongly agree (25%), disagree (20%), strongly disagree (13%), neutral (7%) and Do not know (1%). However, teachers’ perception on the rural-urban gap in quality is found to be narrower than that of access. Only 8% of respondents disagreed that rural Ghana trails urban Ghana in access as against 33% dissenting views on quality. This is attributed to the about 74% dissenting views as regards rural-urban inequity in the availability of TLMs in BSs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Level of perceptions in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of Adequate facilities</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of adequate teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention of quality teachers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of adequate TLMs</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total cumulative % in each category</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total per cent of responses in in each category</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A=Agree, SA=strongly agree, DK=Do Not Know

Figure 5 Teachers’ Views on Urban- Rural inequity in quality in Basic Education
This rural-urban gap in quality in Ghana was further confirmed by results from comparative analyses of secondary data between the five rural and the five urban BSs as well as between the rural and urban circuits in the ANM. Here the issues of quality, quantity and equitable distribution of teachers as well as the availability of school facilities were compared. Firstly, the number of trained teachers in the five selected urban BSs as captured on table 6 was found to be higher than that of the five rural BSs, that is, 81% as against only 60%. Also, female teachers in the urban BSs were also two times the number in the rural BSs, that is, 50% as against 20%. The low numbers of professionally trained and female teachers in the rural BSs suggests their low acceptance of rural postings.

Table 6 Comparison of some Quality indicators on teachers between Rural and Urban Basic Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Total number</th>
<th>Trained teachers</th>
<th>untrained teachers</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BS1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS2</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS3</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS4</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS5</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of TT: 60%  %FT: 20%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Total number</th>
<th>Trained teachers</th>
<th>untrained teachers</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BS1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS4</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>59</strong></td>
<td><strong>48</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of TT: 81%  %FT: 50%

TT = Train Teachers  FT = Female Teachers

Also, the distribution of trained teachers between rural and urban areas in the entire ANM was analysed from the secondary data from the DEO. The results as displayed in table 7 indicate that the supply of trained teachers is skewed in favour of the urban BSs. For example, out of the 62% professionally trained teachers in the ANM, 27% were concentrated in only three circuits in the two main urban towns. The remaining eight circuits (that are predominately rural) where the majority of the BSs are found, shared the remaining 35%.
Table 7 Distribution of teachers between urban and rural circuits in the Asunafo North Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milieu</th>
<th>Name of Circuit</th>
<th>Total number of Teachers</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Trained teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Predominantly rural</td>
<td>Akrodie ‘A’</td>
<td>98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Apeimkro</td>
<td>116</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asumura</td>
<td>141</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ayomso ‘A’</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bediaako/Bitre</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kasapin</td>
<td>108</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Akrodie ‘B’</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ayomso ‘B’</td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predominantly urban</td>
<td>Mim ‘A’</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mim ‘B’</td>
<td>116</td>
<td></td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goaso</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>1310</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>817</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, the quality and quantity of school facilities and TLMs were compared between the rural and urban BSs. The results as captured in table 8 revealed that the availability of core texts books, desks, playing grounds, water and sanitation facilities, and resources rooms for practical lessons were generally either inadequate or substandard in both urban and rural BSs. However, urban BSs are relatively better off than the rural BSs in this regard due to parents support. Parents in urban areas are more able to afford private text books, desks and other materials for their kids due to their relatively better economic status as compared to rural parents. Also, it was evident from the field that PTAs in urban BSs are able to initiate and support the schools with infrastructure and other projects than those in the rural communities.

Table 8: Comparison of School Facilities / Resources between Urban and Rural Basics Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Selected Rural Basic Schools</th>
<th>Selected Urban Basic Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BS1</td>
<td>08 190 24 0 X 0 x X X 0 0 x 0</td>
<td>12 495 41 0 X 0 x 0 0 0 0 x X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS2</td>
<td>06 168 28 0 X 0 x 0 0 X 0 0</td>
<td>06 319 55 0 X 0 x X X 0 X 0 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS3</td>
<td>03 169 56 0 X 0 x 0 X 0 x 0 X 0</td>
<td>03 169 56 0 X 0 x 0 X 0 X 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS4</td>
<td>03 66 22 0 X 0 x 0 X 0 0 x 0 X 0</td>
<td>03 66 22 0 X 0 x 0 X 0 0 x 0 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS5</td>
<td>03 63 21 0 X 0 x X 0 X 0 x 0 X 0</td>
<td>03 63 21 0 X 0 x X 0 X 0 x X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21 656 130 0 5 0 5 4 1 3 2 3 0</td>
<td>26 754 226 0 5 0 5 4 1 3 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: 0 = the category is unavailable  X = the category is available
One favorable thing that emerged, as shown in column 4 of the table is that the rural BSs had better pupil-classroom ratio than the urban BSs, that is, 26 per class as against 51 for the urban BSs. However, there appear to be a negative connotation. As further perusal point that that it may be linked to the problems of high drop out and the lower transition rates in the rural BSs. Also, the high population density in the urban areas can be a contributing factor.

5.3 The impact of Government Strategies on Basic Education

Firstly, the awareness level with regard to GoG policies as exist in texts (policy documents) and respondents’ perception on their actual implementation as evident in the schools were explored. With respect to this respondents were asked to tick as many as possible from a list of GoG policies they are familiar with. The results as captured in column (A) of table 9 indicate generally that, respondents (teachers) had adequate knowledge on the various GoG policy strategies toward equitable universal quality BE.

Also, as regard to their perceptions on the actual implementation in terms of what is being felt in the schools, the fCUBE, the capitation grant, the free uniforms, the Teachers’ upgrading and the TCAI / Pupils teachers programmes came up as the most widespread programmes (refer to column C of table 9). This is not actually surprising as most of these programmes are being implemented throughout the country. Although, the Teacher Community Assistant Initiative (TCAI) / Pupils teachers programme is not a nationwide programme yet it came up very popular among the rural BSs. About 85% of respondents asserted that their schools have actually benefited from it. This explains that fact that this programme specifically targets deprived rural areas in Ghana. On the contrary, programme like the evaluation of quality and standard by the newly established National Inspectorate Board (NIB) is a wholesale national programme yet, its awareness level among teachers is very low.

It also came to the fore that apart from the fCUBE, the capitation grant, and the NALAP, there seem to be wide gap between GOG policy texts and their actual implementation. For example, as captured in column C of table 9, the gap between respondent’s awareness level and their perceptions on the actual implementation is 65% for of the District Sponsorship Programme for trainee teachers and 60% for the SFP.
Furthermore, the impact of each of the selected GOG strategies on BE was gauged and ranked. This was done by adding the weights of respondent’s awareness level and their perceptions on their actual implementation less their perceptions on the discordant between each of the GOG policy texts and their actual implementation. The results as presented in column D of table 9 show that the fCUBE and the capitation grant policies are the best ranked policy strategies. This is followed by the TCAI, the free uniform and the untrained teachers upgrading programme. Programmes like the Girls PASS, the Complimentary Basic Education Programme (CEEP) as well as the NIB are yet to make any meaningful impact on BE in the study District.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy framework and Strategies towards equitable universal basic education</th>
<th>Awareness level (A)</th>
<th>Actual implementation (B)</th>
<th>Discordant (A) - (b) (C)</th>
<th>Impact (A)+ (b) - (C) (D)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fCUBE</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitation grant</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School feeding programme</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Early Childhood Development (ECD) policy</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free uniforms</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Girls PASS Programme</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complimentary Basic Education Programme</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untrained teachers upgrading programmes -Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE) and Distance Programme in BE by UCC and UEW</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Community Assistant Initiative (TCAI) programme/Pupils - community teachers</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Sponsorship Program for trainee teachers</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The National Literacy Accelerated Programme (NALAP)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of quality standard by National Inspectorate Board (NIB)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also, teachers’ perceptions on the general level of the impact of GOG programmes in addressing the inequities in her BE were sought. The responses are captured in table 10 generally indicate an average impact. About 46% described the impact as either low or very low and equally 44% described it as high or very high whilst 10% remained neutral.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Impact of GOG Strategies / Interventions on Equity to Accessible Quality BE</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teachers were also asked in an open-ended question to identify the major loopholes in GoG policy strategies towards achieving equitable universal quality BE. The problems of low monitoring and evaluation, lack of adequate and sustainable funding, weak financial and public administration systems, lack of adequate capacity by stakeholders, lack of adequate professional and experience teachers, irregular release of the capitation grants to the schools, inequity in the distribution of educational resources and personnel, low involvement of community level stakeholders and lack of proper targeting came up as the major pitfalls in the implementation process.

5.4 Contextualising Strategies to Bridge the Rural-Urban Gap in Basic Education in Ghana

This section answers research question 2. It begins with identifying the contextual factors that affect access and quality and also fuel the rural-urban inequality. The next explores relevant strategies that hold potentials in addressing the challenges based on the peculiarity of ANM and rural Ghana in general. It last section delves into the best ways to implement the relevant strategies so as to eliminate the inequities.

Research question 2 was extensively answered by both the primary and secondary data. The general findings were that access to and quality in BE in the study District, particularly, in the rural areas were found to be low. The contextual factors accounting for the low access and the rural-urban gap in access were found to include; geographical inaccessibility due to long distance to school which tends to exacerbate the twin problem of absenteeism and drop-out, high rural poverty, prescribed gender roles for girls and the high level of rural illiteracy. With regard to the factors that account for the rather low quality in BE, especially in the rural communities, issues such as lack of adequate professional and experience teachers; the inequitable distribution of teachers and other educational resources, poor professional development policy; poor living and working conditions of teachers; weak supervision; inadequate funding; poor community and parents’ participation in school came to the fore.

With regard to sustainable strategies to address the low access and quality as well as the rural-urban inequities in access and quality, it was revealed that strategies that are tailored to meet the specific needs and context of rural Ghana are the way out. Here strategies such as efficient ECCD programme; promotion of girls’ education; and those the whip community and parents
support, participation and involvement in school came up as very crucial to the context of rural Ghana. Also, strategies that promote deeper decentralisation in education decision making process and policy implementation also came up. Others such as bicycle programme for pupils who live farther distances away from the schools; cost effective solar lamp programme for people who live in isolated and remote rural areas without access to electricity; expanded and sustainable SFP and; flexible teacher upgrading programmes for non-professional teachers were found to be very relevant to inject equity and also improve access and quality in rural Ghana.

On how these strategies should be implemented, it was revealed that strategies that are properly targeted, have adequate social safety cushions, apply appropriate technology and underpinned by adequate public participation and local content tend to yield the maximum outcomes and have lasting impact on rural communities.

### 5.5 Factors that affect access, quality and equity in BE in Ghana

This section starts with an assessment of the level of access and quality of BE in the study District. This is followed by unearthing the specific geographical, economic and socio-cultural underpinnings that affect access and quality and also exacerbate the rural-urban inequality in BE. This is to inform an assessment of relevant strategies and how they can be contextualised and executed to address the loopholes to access and quality and uproot the rural-urban inequities in BE.

#### 5.5.1 The level and the Contextual factors of Access

The general level of access to BE in the study District was assessed from the perspective of Head teachers. The responses as summarised in table 11 show a level of access that can be described as a little above average. About 55% of head teachers described it as high, 30% as average and 15% described it as low.
Table 11  Head teachers Perceptions on the General level of Access to BE in the Study District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Access to Basic Education in the communities</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also, teachers’ views were sampled on some selected indicators of access through three closed ended questions. This was to unravel how each indicator impact on the rather not too impressive level of access to BE in the communities. As regards the availability of BSs, the results as captured in table 12 suggest a fairly good number of BSs in the communities. However, for about 26% of respondents to describe the situation as scanty available suggest that the BSs are not fairly distributed geographically. Hence it suggests some communities are yet to get their own BSs. This also implies that many pupils may have to cover longer distance to attend BSs in other nearby communities.

As regards accessibility (proximity) to the schools in the communities, about 50% of respondents who constituted the majority were of the view that the BSs are somehow (fairly) accessible. However, another significant number, about 25% of respondents opined that they are not accessible. The 25% dissenting views suggest that the issue of geographical inaccessibility to access is a big problem, especially, in remote and dispersed rural communities. The implication is that a good number of pupils have to commute longer distances to school and those who are too young to walk the longer distances are denied education. This was found to account for the high level of pupils absenteeism, drop out and lateness to school, especially in in the rural areas.

Also, with respect to teachers’ views on affordability, the majority, representing 65% opined that BE is not affordable based on the economic context of the rural communities. Only 30% dissented with 5% remaining neutral. The results as also summarised on table 12 suggest that the issue of affordability is still a hindrance to access, especially, in the rural communities due to high level of poverty.
### Table 12: Teachers views on the level of Availability, Accessibility and Affordability to BE in the Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Availability (adequate number) of BSs in the Communities</th>
<th>Accessibility to BSs in the Communities</th>
<th>How affordable is BE to the Community given their economic situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scantly available</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>Not accessible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somehow available</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>Somehow accessible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>Accessible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very much available</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Very Accessible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The twin issues of absenteeism and drop out were probed to unravel the extent and the underpinning factors. The results as captured in table 13 revealed that absenteeism and drop out among pupils are very high in the communities. The common causes of absenteeism and drop outs were elicited from the head teachers through an open-ended question. As regards the problem of absenteeism, they mentioned issues such as the long distances between some pupils and the schools, nonchalant attitude of some guardians towards their wards’ schooling, inability of parents to provide the basic necessities such as school uniforms, shoes, exercise books and money/food toward their children’s schooling due to high rural poverty, child labour (in the form of children helping their parents on farms, especially during cocoa and maize harvesting seasons and children accompanying parents to nearby market places to sell off farm produce during schools hours) as some of the causes for the high pupils’ absenteeism in the area. With respect to the high dropout, the major causes as identified by head teachers include; the low value placed on education due to the high rural illiteracy, teenage pregnancy and the issue of early marriage that seems to be much encouraged in the rural communities, especially, among migrants’ farmers with roots from the northern part of Ghana. Others such as the inaccessibility and low involvement of guardians in wards schooling were also mentioned as the causes for the high drop outs in the rural communities.

### Table 13: Respondents’ Perceptions on the levels of Absenteeism and Drop out among pupils in the Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupils Absenteeism to school</th>
<th>Dropouts among pupils in the communities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levels</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

70
Specific Contextual factors that Fuel Rural-Urban Inequity in Basic Education

Respondents’ views were sought with regard to specific geographical, socio-cultural and economic contextual factors the communities that hinder access and exacerbate rural-urban the rural-urban inequity in access. Firstly, as regarding geographical context, almost all respondents cited the problem of inaccessibility due to long distances between pupils and their schools as the main geographical blockage to access in rural areas. This was identified to be the underlining cause for the high absenteeism and dropout rates among pupils in the rural communities. For example, table 14 shows the relationship between distance and absenteeism. It compares head teachers’ views on the percentage of their pupils who commute more than 5km on foot to and fro school against their views on the problem of absenteeism. The results show that absenteeism tends to increase with an increasing distance away from the schools. In schools where more than 20% of pupils commute more than 5km to and fro school on foot, forty-five of respondents (head teachers) described the problem of absenteeism as high. However, in schools where less than 5% of pupils commute 5km to school on foot, the problem of absenteeism was described as low. The results also indicate that a sizable number of pupils commute on foot to and fro school. Hence, the likelihood of huge loss of contact hours due to pupils’ lateness to school is inevitable. This also impedes quality.

Table 14 Head teachers’ Perception on Distance Vs the Problem of Absenteeism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of BSs pupils who commute more than 5km to and fro school on foot</th>
<th>Problem of Absenteeism to school among pupils in the community</th>
<th>Total percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 20%</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20%</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15%</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5% and less</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above perceptions of head teachers were further collaborated by results from the analyses of secondary data on attendance and distance for the third term of 2013/14 academic year from the 10 selected BSs in the study District on which secondary data were obtained. This is to understand how the impact of distance on attendance differs from urban and rural areas. Two students (one living closer to the school and another living farthest (5km+) from the school) were selected from each of the ten schools. Table 15 captures the total attendance for pupils from the five rural and five urban BSs categories and the difference in attendance.
between those living closer and those living farthest. The results revealed that in both rural and urban areas, pupils who live closer to their schools tend to have higher attendance rate than those who live farther. However, the gap was comparatively lower in the urban BSs than rural BSs. The gap was 59 among the rural BSs as against only 17 for the urban BSs.

Table 15 Distance Vs attendance from the 10 selected BSs for the 3rd term of 2013/14 academic Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rural Basic Schools</th>
<th>Number of times school opens in the</th>
<th>Total Attendance of pupil who lives: closer to the school</th>
<th>Total Attendance of pupil who lives: farther from the school(5km+)</th>
<th>Difference Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BS1</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS2</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS3</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS4</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS5</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>260</strong></td>
<td><strong>201</strong></td>
<td><strong>59</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Basic schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS1</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS2</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS3</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS4</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS5</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>274</strong></td>
<td><strong>257</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The contextual social-cultural factors in the communities that impede access and quality were also collated through an open ended question. Here teachers were asked to outline at most three common negative social-cultural factors that affect access to quality BE in the communities. They identified the major factors to include: the large household size among the rural folks; low premium placed on education by rural folks due to high illiteracy rate; high social value that is placed on early marriage, especially among settler farmers and in the rural communities and; gender role that have been curved for women which tend to limit them to domestic chores; child labour and the problem of single and irresponsible parenting.

Also, the specific economic factors that affect access to quality education in the communities were elicited from head teachers through an open-ended question. Their responses showed that the issue of low household income, especially in the rural areas, is the major economic barrier to access and equity. Hence the extent to which household income is able to support BE in the communities in terms of the cost sharing arrangements under the fCUBE programme was further explored from the perspective of teachers. They were asked to rate the extent to which household income is able to support BE in the communities. Their responses as captured on table 16 suggest that it is rather low. The majority, about 67% described it as either low or very low. Only 2% dissented that it is very high. The low support of households’
income to BE also has links to the relatively high level of poverty and the large household size in the rural communities.

Table 16: Teachers’ Perceptions on the extent to which Household Income Support BE in rural Ghana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The extent to which household income support the iCUBE in the District</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very low</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.5.2 The level and the factors of Quality Basic Education

The general level of quality in BE in the study District was also sampled from the perspective of head teachers. They were asked to rate the overall quality of BE in the communities. The results as captured on table 17 suggest that the level of quality is very low. Overwhelming majority (80%) described it as low and 20% as an average standard.

Table 17 Head Teachers Perceptions on the Level of Quality of Basic Education in the Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The level of quality of basic education in the community</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The factors that account for the rather low level of quality of BE in the study District were sampled through an open-ended question. Respondents mentioned the issue of insufficient qualified teachers, poor teachers’ motivation, poor facilities, lack of TLMs, inadequate funding, low community participation and parents’ involvement in school as some of the major problems inhibiting quality and equity in BE in Ghana.

Quality and Equity Issues regarding Teachers

Inputs and outputs processes regarding teachers and the extent to which they can be harnessed to address the issue of rural-urban inequity in quality were investigated. Firstly, the results from comparative analyses of the secondary data on teachers for the entire ANM and from the 10 selected BSs (on which secondary data were obtained) as captured earlier on tables 6 and 7 suggest inadequate supply of professional and female teachers in rural BSs due to their refusal of rural postings. The high level of non-professional (pupils’) teachers in the rural BSs was found to impact negatively on the quality of teaching and learning.
The working conditions (relating to emoluments, available resources to work with) and living conditions (relating to access to basic necessities such as decent accommodation, potable water, internet and the like) were also investigated as they have direct bearing on their output and retention. Respondents (teachers) were asked to rate their working conditions. Their responses as captured in table 18 suggest that their working and living conditions are generally not good. For example, the majority (70%) described their working condition as either poor or very poor. Only 10% described it as good.

Table 18 Teachers’ views on their Working and Living Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher’s working conditions</th>
<th>Teacher’s living conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levels</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very poor</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study further investigated the extent to which the state of teachers’ working and living conditions affect their retention in rural BSs. Hence, teachers’ views were sampled through an open-ended question on how long they wish to stay at their current post. The number of years for which respondents (teachers) wish to stay as captured on table 19 averaged about 2 years. This suggests high attrition rate of teachers in the study District, especially, in the remote rural areas. The inability to retain quality and experienced teachers in the rural areas also accounts for the low quality and the rural-urban inequity in quality.

Table 19: The average Number of Years Teachers wish to stay at their current Post

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How long( years) teachers wish to stay in rural school</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>0 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.25 years</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>2.143 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>4.593 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The views of teachers were sought in an open-ended question as to some of the incentives that can lure them to stay at a rural post for relatively long time. They mentioned special incentives such as granting of study leave after at least 4 years of serving at a rural post, assurance of a choice of district after serving for at least 3 years at a rural post, transportation allowances or motor bikes, and provision of decent accommodation.
The State of infrastructure/facilities and Teaching and Learning Materials

Head teachers were asked in a closed question to rate the state of infrastructure/facilities in their schools. The majority (60%) described it as poor. Only 15% opined that it is good, with the rest remaining neutral. Also, teachers’ views were sought as regards the availability of TLMs in the schools. Their responses as summarised also in table 20 indicate that the majority (53%) were of the view that TLMs were scantily available in the schools and 26% said they were not available. Only 12% answered positively. These results are captured in table 20, therefore reveals that the state of infrastructure in BSs in the communities are generally poor and the availability of TLMs for affective teaching and learning is seriously lacking. However, comparison between urban and rural BSs as presented earlier in table 8 indicated that in terms of infrastructure, the urban BSs are relatively better off. However, in terms of provision of TLMs, apart from the provision of private text books (by urban parents), much difference was found between the two milieus. This is further corroborated by teachers’ views on the rural-urban gap in the provision of TLMs in BSs as captured earlier in figure 4 where the majority opined that there is insignificant gap in this regard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head teachers’ Views on the State of Infrastructure in BSs</th>
<th>Teachers views on the Availability of TLMs in BSs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The level of supervision in Basic Schools

The level of supervision by the DOE and the NIB was examined from the perspective of head teachers. They were asked to rate the extent of supervision by DEO/CSs and the NIB in their schools. These responses as presented in table 21 revealed that the oversight supervisory roles by the DEO/CSs and the NIB to ensure quality and efficiency in the schools are very low. For example, with respect to the supervisory role by the DEO/SCs, the majority (55%) described the level as either low or very low. The rest 45% described it as an average. However, as regard the NIB their impact is yet to be felt as evident in 90% of head teachers saying their schools are yet to be audited by the NIB. It was found that due serious logistical constraints
and remoteness of some rural BSs, DEO/CSs tend to visit urban BSs more frequently than remote rural BSs. This also accounts for the rural-urban gap in quality in BE in Ghana.

**Table 21** Head Teachers’ views on the level of supervision by DEO/CSs and the NIB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The level of supervision by the Circuit supervisor/DEO in the schools</th>
<th>The level of Supervision by National Inspectorate Board</th>
<th>National Inspectorate Board has Audited my School in recent time</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Level of Local Stakeholders’ Participation in Basic Education

The level of participation in school by stakeholders at the community level were explored due to their significance in advancing access, quality and equity in BE. Respondents were asked in a closed ended question to rate the level of community, PTA and parent participations in schools. The results as summarised in table 22 show that their level of participation is somehow low. For example, regarding the level of parents’ involvement in child’s schooling (in terms of frequent visits, participation in PTA meetings and projects well as their responsiveness to the child’s educational needs), the majority, and 83% opined that it is either very low or low. Only 9% responded favourably. This low level of participation has negative implication on quality. However, evidence of PTAs projects in the schools suggest that PTAs and parents in the urban BSs are relatively active, more involved and support education than rural PTAs and parents due their relatively better economic and literacy positions.

**Table 22** Respondents’ Perceptions on the level of Participation by Local Stakeholders in BE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The level of community participation in schools</th>
<th>Activeness of the PTAs in the BSs</th>
<th>The level of parents’ involvement in ward’s schooling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>Levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very low</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Not active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Somehow active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very high</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Very Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Funding (Capitation Grant) and Quality

Funding is one of the most important input and process of quality education. Hence head teachers’ views were sought on the capitation grant for BSs which has been the main source of funding the day to day activities of BSs in Ghana following the abolition of fees. They were asked about the sufficiency of the current amount (GH ¢4.50) of grant given per child per term (14 academic weeks) to address the issue of affordability and quality of BE. All respondents (100%) answered in the negative. Also, as regards the timely release of the grants to the schools, the head teachers were asked to rate the regularity. The majority (85%) opined that it is not regular. Only 15% answered positively. These responses as captured in table 23 suggest that the current amount of capitation grant per child is not only insufficient in providing affordable quality BE, but also the irregularity in its release has negative implications on effective planning and management of the schools.

Table 23  Head teachers’ views on the Sufficiency and Timely Release of the Capitation Grant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The amount (GH ¢4.50) of capitation grant given per child is sufficient enough to address the issue of access and quality in the communities</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers Views on the regularity in the release of the capitation grant</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very regular</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not regular</td>
<td>85.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quality content: Basic Education Curriculum

Quality issues regarding the BE curriculum in Ghana was investigated through closed-ended questions. This is to understand its impact on quality and the realisation of the national objectives. When teachers’ views were sought on the relevance of the BE curriculum, it was revealed that it was relevant to the needs of pupils, communities and the nation as a whole. The majority translating to about 60% described it as either very relevant or relevant, with another significant 24% describing it as somehow (average) relevant. Only 3% responded negatively (refer to table 24). However, it was found that the school’s time table vis-à-vis the curriculum is not flexible enough to align itself to needs of the pupils as well as the local context. This is evident in the responses where 39% of respondents described it as somehow (average) flexible, 33% as not flexible with only 1% describing it as very flexible. The rigid
nature of the school’s time table vis-à-vis the curriculum does not give ample opportunities for pupils to explore the immediate environment. It does not also provide the opportunities for teachers to meet the learning needs of pupils who learn slowly.

Furthermore, the relationships among the intended curriculum (curriculum as exist in text), the implemented curriculum (what teachers are able to actually teach) and the attained curriculum (what learners are actually able to learn) were probed. This was done in order to understand the extent to which the BS curriculum in Ghana is being implemented so as to achieve the stated objectives. Here, head teachers were asked to describe how small or big the gaps between the three were. The results as also displayed in table 24 suggest that the gaps between the three were quite wide. Thirty-five (35%) of respondents opined that the gaps were very wide. Another 35% described the gaps as too wide with only 20% opined that the gaps are small.

The responses on quality content as captured in table 25 generally suggest that the BE curriculum in Ghana, in its current state, is relevant enough to inject the necessary quality and equity. However, flexible school time table system is needed to make it more responsive to the needs of each locality and pupil. The wide gaps among the intended, the implemented and attained curricula is an indication that the national objectives on BE are not fully being realised, especially, in the rural BSs where quality and sufficient teachers, facilities and TLMs, which are crucial in the successful implementation of any curriculum are seriously lacking.

Table 24 Respondents’ Views on the BE Curriculum and its attainment of quality and the National Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The flexibility of the School time table vis-à-vis the curricula</th>
<th>Relevance of the School Curricula to the Context of the Community</th>
<th>Gap between the intended and Attained BE Curricula</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>Levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not flexible</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>Very relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somehow flexible</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>Relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>Somehow relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very flexible</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>not relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.6 Relevant strategies for narrowing rural-Urban Gap in Basic Education

This section is the final leg of the answer to the research question 2. It explores both general and specific strategies that can enhance rural-urban equity in access and quality. It also delves into the specific strategies that can overcome the identified contextual factors in rural areas that tend to fuel the inequity. The last section explores how relevant strategies ought to be implemented based on the peculiar context of rural Ghana.

5.6.1 Relevant Strategies for enhancing rural-urban equity

Firstly, the general strategies for enhancing rural-urban equity in Ghana were explored. Here, the researcher carefully pre-selected a list of strategies (refer to table 27) based on literature on the problem under study. Teachers were asked in close questions, to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree that those strategies can help narrow the rural-urban gap in BE based on the peculiar context of ANM and rural Ghana in general. The cumulative responses as summarised on the last row of table 25, indicate that the majority translating to some 78% either agreed or strongly agreed that those strategies are relevant to the context of rural Ghana for injecting equity in her BE. However, on the potential that PPPs hold in creating efficiency which can be utilised to address the problem of poor supervision of public BSs in Ghana, the majority (52%) of the respondents disagreed that privatising the monitoring and evaluation aspect of BE management can improve quality. Another significant number (40%) although in the minority agreed.

The results on relevant strategies for bridging the rural and urban gap as captured in table 25 generally suggest that strategies that are imbued with adequate rural lens of deep appreciation of peculiar rural context and which seek to target the most excluded by placing education to their door steps and involving them in the policy making and implementation processes are appropriate to the context of rural Ghana for enhancing rural-urban equity in BE.
Table 25  Relevant / Contextual Strategies for Enhancing Rural-Urban Equity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Strategies</th>
<th>% of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social intervention Strategies/programmes can increase equity when it is tailored</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to the specific context of the intended communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting early childhood education can be the starting point for equity between</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>urban and rural areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting girls education can increase equity in access in basic education in</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special incentives (competitive working conditions and career development) for</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teachers in rural Ghana will attract and maintain quality teachers in rural BSs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privatising the monitoring and evaluation aspect of basic education management in</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana will improve quality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase community participation in school management improves quality</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decentralising BE curriculum (including linking schooling instructions and TLMs)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to reflect the local context improves relevance and quality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devolving the recruitment of teachers to the DAs can enhance retention and also</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improve quality and relevance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of cumulative responses in each category</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A=Agree, SA=strongly agree, DK=Do Not Know

5.6.2 Strategies to overcome the Contextual factors that fuel the Rural-Urban Inequity

The specific strategies that hold potentials to minimising the geographical, economic and socio/cultural blockages to equity in access and quality of BE, as identified by this study in the context of the rural areas in ANM and Ghana were explored from the perspectives of teachers. Teachers were asked in open-ended questions to list the specific strategies that can minimise the effects of contextual factors on rural-urban inequity in BE. With respect to the issue of geographical inaccessibility and its effects of absenteeism, drop out and lateness to school, provision of bicycles for pupils, extension of new schools to communities which do not have and attracting parents with incentives (in the form of conditional cash transfer) to send their children who are too young to walk longer distances to school were elicited as the most appropriate strategies.

Also, regarding how to minimise the effects of the high rural poverty which was identified as the main economic blockage to equitable access to BE in the rural Ghana, they suggested the need to expand the SFP to cover all deprived rural communities, increase in the amount of...
the capitation grant per pupil, and investment in sustainable livelihood programmes in agriculture and agro processing programmes by DAs and government so as to increase household income and its ability to support education. Also, head teachers’ views were sought on the realistic amount of capitation grant per child per term (14weeks) that can tackle the economic blockage to access and quality given the current economic status of the rural folks. The average amount proposed elicited through an open-ended question as captured in table 26 is GSH 21.00 (equivalent to 5.50 USD as at September, 2015) as against the current amount of only GSH 4.50 (USD 1.00 as at September, 2015).

Table 26 Head Teachers’ Views on Realistic Amount of Capitation Grant per Pupil per Term

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head teachers’ views on proposed amount of capitation grant per pupil per term that can address the rural –urban inequity in access and quality of BE</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GHe</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>155.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>160.00</td>
<td>21.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More significantly, it was also revealed that there are some favourable economic factors in the communities that can be harnessed to improve BE. When respondents (teachers) were also asked in an opened-ended question to identify favourable economic factors that can be harnessed for school improvement, they identified the issue of communal labour as a tool that can be utilised to facilitate the expansion of school infrastructure. This can help to reduce the cost of school projects and at the same time increase community ownership of the schools. Also, they identified the annual payment of bonuses to cocoa farmers by the government as another tool that can help to address the problem of geographical inaccessibility. These cash bonuses, they suggested, can be converted to the provision of bicycles for the children of cocoa farmers.

Teachers views were also sought on specific strategies that can minimised the adverse effects posed by the identified socio-cultural factors in the communities. They mentioned strategies like public education on the importance of girls’ education in the rural communities; the promotion and renewal of the strong traditional Ghanaian social and family value systems by the traditional leaders; and inclusion of effective reproductive health education in BE curriculum, especially at the upper primary and JHS levels as the way out. Respondents (teachers) were also asked in an open-ended question to identify some of the contextual socio-cultural factors in the communities that can be harnessed to improve access to quality BE.
They identified the issue of high level of hospitability accorded by the people to visitors as a tool that can be harness to reduce the high teachers’ alteration in the rural communities. They also mentioned the communal spirit among the rural folks as a tool that can be utilised to facilitate the success of educational projects.

5.6.3 How to Execute Educational Strategy in Rural Ghana

This section narrows down further to assess some past and ongoing strategies/programmes in ANM that seek to enhance access, quality and equity in BE. This is to identify the underlining factors for their successes or failures so as to serve as a guide on how policy strategies ought to be implemented in the rural areas. Head teachers were asked to identify some special programmes either by government or NGO that their schools/communities have benefited from. They were also asked to comment on their impact as well as the factors in the implementation process that contributed to the level of impact. From the responses (refer to Appendix 1), they identified some of these special programmes to include; the bicycle for pupils programme by Care International, formation of Community Child and Gender Protection Committees in some of the communities by a local NGO, the solar lamps project for wards of cocoa farmers by local cocoa marketing company, and SFP by GoG.

Generally, with the exception of the SFP, they described the impact of the programmes as very positive. They identified the issues of proper targeting, efficient monitoring, and community involvement in the implementation process as well as the flexibility, and appropriateness of the programmes as the trump cards for the successes. However, with regard to the SFP, they mentioned the problem of unsustainable funding, inadequate community participation, low coverage and political interference in the selection of beneficiaries as the underlining reasons why its full potentials have not been realised. The results as presented in Appendix (1) suggest generally that strategies/interventions that are appropriate to the context of a given rural milieu, are properly targeted, are cost-effective, adopt the appropriate technology, and are underpinned by adequate public education and local participation tend to yield sustainable and equitable outcomes in BE.

In summary, this chapter presented the results of the findings of this study based on analysis and presentations of the quantitative data that were amassed. The results generally revealed an appreciable level of rural-urban inequities in BE in Ghana. The inequities have links to the
general loopholes in the implementation of GoG policy strategies. The inequities are also fuelled by some pervasive contextual factors, peculiar to rural Ghana, for which policy makers ought to put on rural lens in order to identify and addressed them. Generally it was found that strategies that are executed in tandem with peculiar rural context tend to enhance rural-urban equity in BE in Ghana. These findings are discussed in details in the next chapter.
6 Discussion of Findings

This chapter discusses the major findings of this study. It starts with a discussion on the findings on the state of equitable accessible quality Basic Education in Ghana. It continued with the discussion on the findings on relevant strategies that have potentials to narrow the rural-urban gap in BE in Ghana. It ends with discussion on the best ways to implement the relevant strategies identified thereof in rural Ghana so as to advance the course of sustainable outcomes in BE policy implementation geared toward achieving SDG 4.

6.1 The state of Equitable Accessible Quality Basic Education in Ghana

This section presents and interprets the major findings on the state of BE in Ghana. It also compares the findings to other studies and data both in Ghana and across the globe. It is presented under two main sub-headings. It starts by discussing the finding on the extent of rural-urban inequities in access and quality in BE in Ghana. It is followed by discussion on the finding on how GoG policy strategies have addressed the inequities.

6.1.1 Rural-Urban Inequities in Access and Quality

The findings on the level of access in and quality of BE have revealed that, generally, access and quality are comparatively low in rural Ghana. The low access is due to the high level of pupils’ absenteeism and drop outs; the problem of geographical inaccessibility, unavailability of schools in some communities and the high level of poverty. The low level of quality is also attributed to the problem of insufficient professional teachers in rural BSs coupled with their high alteration rate due to rural push factors. Others, such as the problem of poor facilities, inadequate TLMs, ineffective implementation of the BE curriculum, low level of supervision, low levels of parents and community participation in BSs and more significantly the skewedness in the distribution of educational resources, personnel and attention in favour of the urban BSs were also found to be contributory factors. The rather weak performance in advancing access in and quality of BE in rural Ghana as compared to urban Ghana is the main reason why Ghana missed most of the EFA targets by the 2015 deadline.
The findings on the extent of rural-urban inequity in BE unveiled deep-seated rural-urban inequities in access and quality in BE in Ghana. With the exception of the availability of TLMs in schools, the rural areas were found to be trailing the urban areas in all the other indicators for access and quality that were explored by this study. The relatively better urban statistics on BE in Ghana appears to hinge on the fact that urban parents are better educated, more able to pressure and demand the rights of their wards’ education from authorities than rural folks. Also, urban PTAs and parents seem to be more active participants in schools’ activities and are better resourced to help education than those in the rural communities. The comparatively activeness of urban parents in school activities affirms the human right argument that, the right to education is the bedrock for the realisation of all other forms of rights as more educated people tend to demand and also rally others to demand their rights (Tomasevski, 2004; UNESCO, 2007).

The findings on the extent of rural-urban inequities were compared to statistics and studies in other developing countries. It appears the story is not much different. As in the case of Morocco, about 90% of children in rural areas started primary school, but 40% dropped out before reaching grade 6 as against less than 10% for urban children due to the problem of affordability and unavailability (Benhassine, et al., 2014). Also, UNESCO (2015) GMR on EFA revealed that in Sierra Leon, although the rural-urban gap among children who have never attended school before had decreased by some 31% points, it still stands at 19% for rural as against 11% for urban. In Guinea too, the gap is very wide, that is, 48% for rural and 13% urban. Similarly, rural access in Nigeria deteriorated between 2003 and 2013 due to socio-cultural, affordability and accessibility issues (UNESCO, 2015a). Also, Muralidharan & Prakash (2013), revealed that in India, geographical inaccessibility (long distances) and social-cultural practices created a huge rural-urban gap in access, especially in enrolment and attendance to lower and upper secondary school among girls. In terms of quality, UNESCO GMR (2015) revealed that the availability of quality teachers, inadequate core textbooks, TLMs and other educational facilities and large class size remain serious challenges to quality education globally and the severity of these problems is higher in deprived geographical locations across the globe. For example, In India, although average primary pupil-teacher ratio improved in recent times, geographical variation between more metropolitan regions and rural regions is very rife. The ratio was 41:1 in Utter Preades (predominantly rural state) as against 23:1 in Andhar Prades (predominantly urban) in 2013/14 academic year (UNESCO, 2015a). The GMR (2015) revealed further that in South Africa; more qualified teachers are
normally deployed in urban better resourced schools. The similarity of this finding on Ghana and that of the developing world suggest that the right to education by rural folks in the developing world have not been adequately addressed. It also affirms the gap in international educational policy discourse as identified in the introduction chapter, which is, the overgeneralisation and universalisation of educational challenges, strategies and outcomes, normally base on urban bureaucratic purview.

The findings on the extent of rural-urban inequities are also corroborated by several studies in Ghana including Ankomah et al. (2005), Adamu-Issah et.al.(2007), Little (2010), Owusu & Afutu-Kotey (2009), Lynch (2013) and Aliu & Sakara (2014). Although they identified modest increase in access quality and gender parity in BE in Ghana following the implementation of the fCUBE, ESP and their attendants’ programmes. However, their findings also suggest that the interventions have not significantly addressed the rural-urban inequity in BE. For example, Ankomah et al. (2005) and Etsey (2005), found that quality in BE was lower in rural and public BSs than urban and private schools. They also identified low level of supervision mostly in public schools and the lack of professional teachers, especially in the rural Ghana as the main causes for the gap. Also, statistical and review reports by GSS (2012, 2014) and MoE (2010; 2013) as highlighted in section 1.1 and Table 1 also affirmed the rural-urban gap in access and quality in BE in Ghana.

However, the finding of this study on the skewedness in the distribution of qualified teachers in favour of urban BSs due to the low acceptance of rural postings deviates from the finding of Ekpe (2012) in his studies into ‘quality issues at the policy and implementation level’ following the abolition of fees in BSs in Ghana. He found that there were enough and qualified teachers in the BSs and the district he studied although the schools were rural BSs and the study setting (Adangwe West district of Ghana) is also predominantly rural. However, it appears that the scope and the context of the study setting may have led to the different results. Only two BSs were included in his study. Inclusion of more schools may have given a different result. Also, unlike ANM which is very remote, Adangwe West district is very close to the national capital, Accra. Hence it enjoys the trickling down effect with regard to teachers due to the congestion of teachers in the national capital. Therefore, the district although rural is not deprived in terms of supplies of teachers due to its closeness to the national capital. This further affirms the finding that remoteness or geographical inaccessibility is one of the major contextual factor for deprivation of most isolated rural
communities in accessing quality BE in Ghana and across the world especially, the South. This is consistent with the rural lens argument by Cobbold (2006), Clark and Stevens (2008), Miller (2015) and Wallace & Boylon (2009) on the need of policy makers to lend themselves into appreciation of this unique context of place of rural settings so as to fashion appropriate strategies to ameliorate the impact of rural deficit due to remoteness on access to quality education.

6.1.2 The Impact of GoG Policy Strategies on Basic Education

The findings on the general impact of the various GOG policy strategies on BE revealed that their impact on BE have been generally modest, although not too impressive. The fCUBE and the ESP and their attendants’ programmes have contributed to sustained improvements in access, quality and equity in general. These have enabled the country to achieve the EFA goal 5 on gender parity at the primary. It has also attained MDG goal and the first leg of EFA goal 2 on universal access to primary education. However, the second leg which is ensuring universal completion of free compulsory primary education of good quality by 2015 was not achieved. The finding is similar to the findings of Adamu-Issah et.al. (2007), Little (2010), Owusu & Aftu-Kotey (2009), Lynch (2013), Aliu & Sakara (2014) and MoE (2010; 2013) into GOG policy strategies (as highlighted in section 3.5). These studies also identified sustained improvement in access, quality and gender equity. This study like the findings of those studies on Ghana revealed further that Ghana has performed comparatively better in universal access and gender equality than that of quality, rural-urban equity as well as at the primary level than at the lower secondary or the JHS level.

It was also revealed that there is wide gap between GoG policy texts and their actual implementation due to the identified loopholes, especially, the issues of lack of sustainable funding, weak monitoring and evaluation, inadequate contextualisation and poor targeting. These loopholes prevent the translation of GoG policy texts into real actions so as to achieve the desired outcomes. Apart from the untrained teacher upgrading programme, the free uniform and the SFP which were found to have some level of inbuilt mechanisms to specifically target deprived rural pupils, the other interventions are implemented across-board, with little consideration to the peculiar needs and context of each milieu. However, as argued by Lewin (2007), convergence approaches of universalising the challenges of education and their solutions across board is inadequate in offering sustainable solutions in addressing the
inequities between and within regions and countries. This finding on the loopholes in the GoG policy strategies and the gap between the intended and the implemented policy is similar to the finding of Ipke (2012). He also identified evidence of a clear discordance between policy formulation and implementation in the ESP due to some of the loopholes identified by this study. He noted that the measures as outlined in the ESP, for example, are very relevant and adequate in attaining quality and accessible BE if these strategies would efficiently be translated from planning to implementation stage. He therefore argued for a holistic policy planning and the implementation processes which are all encompassing, tie to specific context and timelines with each sector and personnel given a clear cut roles and targets.

The findings on the impact of GoG policy strategies on rural-urban equity revealed that although the various GoG policy strategies appear relevant, they have not sufficiently dealt with the rural-urban inequities mostly due to insufficient contextualisation; improper targeting, low community involvement or participation in decision making process as well as the insufficient and inequitable distribution of educational resources and attention in favour of urban BSs. These loopholes are also the immediate causes which together with peculiar rural factors fuel the rural-urban inequity in BE. It appears that GoG policy strategies lack adequate, deliberate and specific focus on uprooting the rural- urban inequity in BE, as compare to the focus on the general improvement of access and quality across board, as well as reducing the wide gender and the north– south gap in Ghana. This wide rural-urban gap is one of the major reasons why Ghana has not achieve her overall BE goals as envisaged by the fCUBE and the ESP and EFA goal 2 on completion of free compulsory universal quality BE. The wide rural-urban gap in Ghana suggests that policy making and implementation processes in Ghana continuous to suffer from urban bureaucratic purview of the issues at the expense of the requisite rural lens. This anomaly is inconsistent with the rural lens argument by Wallace & Boylon (2007) and Clark and Stevens (2008) as espoused in the theoretical review Chapter (refer to 2.1.1).

Situating the various GoG policy strategies in the global context, generally, they appear to be in tune with current global strategies as they are also premise on the right-based approach to BE. They also seek to eliminate the obstacles to the availability, accessibility and affordability and acceptability to school by targeting and hooking vulnerable groups, into the educational process with social safety net programmes. Hence the finding is consistent with those of Allen & Gillespie, (2001); Kabeer, (2000); Tomasevski, (2005); Schwartzma, (2005);
Muralidharan & Prakash,( 2013) on relevant social safety strategies for enhancing access, quality in equity in BE in developing countries. Like the global picture, GoG strategies on BE have resemblance of cash transfer which seek to redistribute the social cost of education in favour of the poor. As regard to the impact, the Ghanaian picture also mirrors that of the global. According to UNESCO (2015a), notwithstanding the global progress in universal access, drop out is still high in some 32 countries. Also, about 31% percent of countries with available data failed to attain the gender parity goal by 2015. The report further revealed that though there has been improvement in pupil-teacher ratio, training of qualified teachers and general increase in quality standard; still less than 75% of primary school teachers are professionally trained in some 146 countries.

6.2 Contextual Strategies for Bridging the Rural-Urban Gap in Basic Education

This section presents and interprets the major findings on how to contextualise and execute strategies to enhance access and quality and also bridge the rural-urban gap in BE in Ghana. It also compares the findings to other studies both in Ghana and across the globe. It begins with the discussion and interpretation of the findings on contextual factors that affect access and quality and fuel the rural-urban inequity in BE in Ghana. It is followed by discussion on strategies that are in tune with the peculiarity of rural Ghana. It ends with discussion on relevant strategies to overcoming the contextual factors that fuel the rural-urban inequities.

6.2.1 Contextual Factors that Fuel the Rural-Urban Inequality

This study unveiled certain endemic factors peculiar to the geographical, economic and socio-cultural setting of rural Ghana which tend to adversely affect access to quality and fuel the rural-urban inequity in BE. It was revealed that the problem of geographically inaccessibility to BSs due to the long distances between pupils and the schools is the major factor for the comparatively low access in rural Ghana. This became evident in the fact that attendance rate in rural BSs decreases as the distances between pupils and their school increases. This inaccessibility is also a major hindrance to the implementation of the national ECD policy in rural Ghana. This is because pupils who are too young to walk longer distances to school are denied KG education. Also, the remoteness of some of the rural BSs coupled with logistical constraints limits the extent to which the DEO/CSs and the NIB undertake
effective supervision in those schools. Comparatively, in the urban areas the effects of distance on attendance and supervision was found to be insignificant. Unlike urban Ghana where there is easy accessibility due to better transportation network, in rural Ghana the commonest means of transportation to school by pupils is by foot. This is due to the fact that hamlets and homesteads (on the farm settlements) in rural Ghana are mostly scattered and are connected to the main villages through footpaths and feeder roads (Amoako, 2010; Cobbold 2006). Many pupils therefore have to walk several hours to other nearby villages for school. Attendance to school therefore reduces significantly, especially, during the peak of the raining season (May-September) in Ghana. Also, due to high rural poverty, majority of households are not able to afford bicycles for their children schooling which may have contributed to the reduction in absenteeism, drop out and lateness to school.

It was also revealed that there are also some specific contextual economic and socio-cultural factors in rural Ghana that tend to impact negatively on access and quality of education in rural communities. The high rural poverty couple with the relatively large household sizes tend to reduce the ability of household income to support education. The effect of affordability on access is therefore very eminent in rural as compare to urban Ghana. Socio-culturally, the issues of early marriage, forced marriage, teenage pregnancy and the traditional prescribed gender roles for girls as well as the issue of high illiteracy and the lack of role models are very rife in rural Ghana. These are major blockages to access to quality BE, especially that of girls.

These peculiar rural contexts are the major underpinning and latent forces that mastermind the rural–urban inequity in BE in Ghana. The dichotomy of rural-urban contexts therefore poses different implications on access to and quality in BE as well as the appropriate interventions. This suggest that in order for policy makers to foresee the likelihood effects that these latent forces may pose to the implementation of any educational policy strategy in rural Ghana, require that they put on the necessary rural lens as suggested by Wallace & Boylan (2007). They ought to gather adequate local knowledge in order to understand and appreciate the existing contexts so as to fashion out appropriate strategies to meet the peculiarity of each milieu.

The findings on the contextual factors that affect access and quality and also fuel the rural-urban inequities in BE in Ghana are consistent with Lewin (2007) study on diversity of convergence where he identified that different contexts of different milieu have different
implications on challenges for expanded access in education (refer to 3. 4). They are also inconsonance with Kubow & Fossum, (2007) and Akyeanpong (2005), arguments on the need of policy makers to take into consideration the issue of the reality of diversity of contexts and adapt policies, programmes and curricular strategies to the conditions of a given area base on the right-based approach in order to achieve sustainable outcomes. The finding is also consistent with the rural lens argument by Wallace Boylan (2007) and Clark & Stevens, (2008) (as highlight in section 2.1.1). The findings on contextual factors and their implication on BE policy implementation are also supported by the case studies by Benhassine, et al. (2015) into the Morocco cash transfer policy, Kang and Hong, (2008) into the Republic of Korean teacher policy, the Brazilian redistribution and decentralization reform policy by the World Bank, Muralidharan & Prakash (2013) study into the Bihar State Bicycle for Girls programme in Indian and, Humphes & Crawfurd (2014) into the Nigeria flexible timetabling system for the Islamic dominated north (as highlighted in section 3.4.1). The similarities of the findings suggest the need for policy makers to appreciate and take on-board in the policy planning and implementation processes the issue of divergence of contexts and its implications on policy strategies so as to make the implementation process more flexible and responsive to local needs.

6.2.2 Enhancing Rural-urban Equity in Basic Education

The findings on relevant strategies that hold prospect for enhancing rural-urban equity in BE based on the peculiar context of rural Ghana revealed generally that well-tailored strategies/programmes that are responsive to the needs of rural folks and specifically target them with social interventions tend to yield sustainable outcomes in equity. This finding is supported by Carnoy’s (1999), equity–driven framework as has been espoused in the theoretical framework chapter (refer to section 2.1.1) where he argued for reforms that provide equal opportunity and also reaching out to the most socially vulnerable group like rural folks with equitable accessible education.

The study also found that the prospect of ECCD strategy as a conduit for laying a strong foundation for sustainable equity in BE is very strong and appropriate to the context of Ghana. Although GoG White Paper on Educational Reform, 2004 has proposed two years of compulsory KG education as part of BE and the ESP seeks to expand ECD by ensuring that at least every primary school in Ghana is attached with a KG, universal coverage has not been
achieved. In rural Ghana, unavailability and the inaccessibility (proximity) remain the greatest obstacles. Many BSs and communities in rural Ghana do not have KGs and early childhood centres. Early childhood centres, properly known as day care centres in Ghana, are mostly privately owned and are found mostly in urban centres as they are most patronised by people in the formal sector. This suggests that more investment is deeded to expand access to ECE in the rural communities. Also, the problem of inaccessibility due to long distance between the children and the schools which is also linked to the problem of unavailability is another great obstacle to access to KG education, in rural Ghana. Although parents can play an important role in reducing the impact of distance on access to ECE by sending their ward to school regularly, that seems not to be the case. A typical everyday life in rural Ghana is characterised by majority going to their farms at dawn in order to have sufficient time to work in the morning so as to avoid the scorch afternoon sunshine. This therefore discourages most parents to send their young ones to school before going to their farms. Hence, children who are too young to walk longer distance to school are denied KG education. Conditional cash transfer programme (in the form of agriculture inputs) that can entice rural parents to send their young ones to school before proceeding to their farms can also reduce the obstacle pose by inaccessibility relating to proximity.

The finding on the prospect of ECCD as a foundation for equity in BE is consistent with the findings of Barnett (2008); Berlinski, Galiani, & Gertler (2009) and Mayer (2004) as regard to the positive impact of ECCD interventions on child’s development and competencies in later life. However these studies also alluded to the problem that inaccessibility, unavailability and poverty pose to equitable access to ECCD programmes in developing countries. They therefore recommended for an integrated approach where ECCD policies are linked with food-nutrition, cash transfers and abolition of fees programmes as the panacea to uproot to enhance ECCD to uproot inequities. The finding on the prospect of ECCD as a foundation for achieving universal access, quality and equity is also consistent with the finding of the Ghana’s Education Sector Review report (2013). According to the report the ECD has contributed in enhancing access and equity in BE in Ghana. It revealed that the highest increase in enrolment at the basic level since 2005 has been recorded at KG level. With regard to equity, according to the report, gender parity has been almost surpassed at the KG level, representing a higher proportion of girls than boys in school for the 4-5-year-old cohorts (MoE, 2013). Also, KG education and its complementary programmes such as the SFP have enhanced rural-urban equity. For example, rural deprived districts in Ghana
recorded higher net enrolment ratio in KG in the 2012/13 academic year than that of the national level, that is, 76% as against 73% (Ibid).

Another relevant strategy that was also found to be very appropriate to the Ghanaian context is the promotion of girl-child education. Many girls in Ghana drop out of school due to early marriage, force marriage and teenage pregnancy. This is even more pronounced in the rural Ghana where illiteracy and strong adherence to custom and traditions tend to encourage early marriage more than girls' education. Also, due to insufficient reproductive health information many girls also drop out of school as a result of early and unplanned pregnancies. Rural communities tend to place low value on girls’ education due to the misconception that after all the girl child will enter into marriage any time soon and hence must be taught how to manage the home rather that wasting time and resources in school. These factors have contributed to the rather low completion of girls in BE as well as their transition to upper secondary school. Aikman & Unterhalter (2013) and Tomasevski (2005) suggested that strategies that seek to free girls from socio-cultural practices (including force and early marriage and prescribed gender roles for girls) as well as teenage pregnancy which tend to militate against their education are very crucial. Similarly, in the context of rural Ghana strategies such as public campaigns on the importance of girls’ education in communities, inclusion of effective reproductive health education in the BE curriculum, as well as special incentive packages to attract and retain girls in schools are very relevant. This finding on girl’s education as relevant strategies for equity in Ghana is consistent with the findings of Sasmaz (2014) and Muralidharan & Prakash (2013). Sasmaz (2014) found that in Turkey, educational reforms which sought to expand school participation for girls by providing incentive for girls from poor households and a national awareness campaign on girl-child education increased girls’ enrolment substantially. Muralidharan & Prakash (2013), also found that in India a national programme which sought to increase demand for schooling among rural and disadvantage girls and bicycle for girls, and training and recruiting more female teachers improved access among girls. The similarities of the findings of this study and that of Sasmaz (2014) on Turkey and Muralidharan & Prakash (2013) on India is due to the fact that the studies were carried out in rural setting of countries whose socio-cultural persuasions do not only placed much value on early marriage, but also have prescribed gender roles for girls. Hence the challenges that the geographical and socio-cultural contexts pose to girls’ education in the rural milieu of these three countries appear similar. For example, about 30% of Indian, 10% of Turkish, and 8% of Ghanaian female adolescent were in marriage by 2012 (UNICEF, 2016). Also, the strong adherence to customs and traditions, particularly, in
the rural settings of these three countries seem to perpetuate the traditional gender roles that tend to make males superior to females.

The findings on the best strategies to attract and retain qualified and experience teachers in rural areas revealed that special incentives (in the form of competitive working and living conditions) are very appropriate to the context of rural Ghana where there are inadequate professional and experience teachers. It was revealed that many qualified teachers tend to refuse rural postings due to remoteness and lack of basic facilities like electricity, potable water, and internet among others in rural Ghana. The GoG attempt of using the District Sponsorship Programme for trainee teachers to tackle this problem has yielded little impact. This is due to the lack of sufficient commitment and the necessary financial muscle of deprived DAs to regularly pay support grant to teacher trainee students under their sponsorship. Hence most of the students refuse postings into these deprived districts upon completion. Rural BSs are therefore mostly staffed by none-professional (community or pupils’) teachers, mostly by compulsion. Strategies that seek to induce professional teachers to opt for rural posts, based on choice, are therefore very appropriate to the context of rural Ghana. Incentives that are tied to working condition such as study leave to pursue further studies after having served for some number of years in rural BSs as well as competitive salaries and allowances can achieve this end. Others that are connected to the living conditions such as decent accommodation and improved basic social infrastructure in rural areas can also do the trick. The findings are consistent with that of Kang & Hong (2008) on South Korean teacher deployment policy where additional incentives for teachers helped staffing rural schools with quality teachers through choice.

PPPs has been argued as one of the potential strategies that can create efficiency and uproot the problem of weak supervision which has been identified as one of the biggest bottlenecks to quality of BE in public and rural BSs in Ghana. However, the finding of this study revealed, that it might not yield the needed results in the case of rural Ghana due to the peculiar challenges pose by remoteness and isolation. This is consistent with the observations of Clark and Stevens (2008); Cobbold (2006), Miller (2015) and Cobbold (2006), Clark and Stevens (2008), Miller (2015) and Wallace & Boylon (2009 that remoteness has created deficiencies in living and working in the rural milieu. Hence, rural schools are mostly staffed by compulsion rather than choice. This suggests that introducing a stringent supervision through PPPs may increase the alteration rate of teachers in rural BSs and further increase the
refusing of rural postings. This is particular so in remote rural Ghana where sometimes teachers have to travel for about two days just to withdraw their salary from the nearest bank.

The findings on relevant strategies to enhance rural-urban equity revealed further that decentralisation in term of the school curriculum and teachers’ recruitment, is very crucial for enhancing equity, quality and relevance in BE in Ghana. Decentralised curriculum is likely to ensure that TLMs and instructions are linked with the local environment to enhance relevance. Decentralisation of teacher recruitment also reduces the low acceptance of rural postings and the high level of teachers’ alteration in rural BSs. It can further enhance the effectiveness of the mother tongue instruction policy as in the case of the NALAG. This is because teachers who are versed in the local language of a given localities are those who are most likely to be recruited. The decentralisation strategy will further ensure that adequate rural lens is given to the policy making processes at the district level. This finding is consistent with Tomasevski (2004; 2006) acceptability and adaptability concepts in her four ‘As’ schema to the right- based approach to education as espoused in the theoretical framework chapter (in section 2.1.1). Effective implementation of the NALAP through proper decentralisation will increase the acceptability in education as it will promote diversity, learner-driven activity and equal educational experiences in. It will also enhance adaptability in education through community participation in schools, and also take on board, local context and content in curriculum planning and implementation processes. It will also encouraged the staffing of rural schools with teachers who understand the local culture .The finding on the advantages of decentralisation of teacher recruitment is also supported by the finding of Kang & Hong (2008) on South Korean teacher deployment policy where decentralisation of recruitment of teachers led to staffing of rural schools with the best teachers.

**Overcoming the Contextual factors that fuel the Rural-urban Inequities**

The finding on specific strategies to overcome the problem of geographical inaccessibility to BSs in the rural communities revealed that flexible bicycle programme for pupils holds a lot of prospects in reducing the effect that long distance pose to access in rural Ghana. Evidence from a bicycle programme that was implemented by Care International in the ANM revealed that it increase attendance and reduced the drop out among beneficiary pupils, who lived farther away from the schools. This finding is consistent to that of Muralidharan & Prakash...
(2013) in their studies on the effect of bicycle programme on girls’ enrolment in Bihar State of India where bicycle programme increased enrolment and attendance to school. Although such a project may come along with huge financial cost which appears disincentive for developing nation like Ghana to explore, however, evidence from the Bihar State of India bicycle project points to the contrary. It was found that, the bicycle program was much more cost effective in increasing enrolment than comparable conditional cash transfer programs in South Asia. This was due to the fact that the programme contributed to reducing the daily cost of school attendance relating to finance, time and safety cost unlike cash transfers. Also, spending on bicycles made it more possible for the entire transfer to ‘stick’ to the targeted girl as opposed to simply augmenting the household budget Muralidharan & Prakash (2013).

It appears the main attempt by GoG strategies to overcome the blockage of geographical inaccessibility to access has been the expansion of schools into new communities. However, financial constraints and population growth tend to derail this effort. The delivery of education service to the door steps of rural folks therefore requires strategies that increase government resources and thereby expenditure on education. Sustainable funding through efficient and all-inclusive taxation system, efficient financial administration mechanisms, efficient management and distribution of national wealth are very crucial to the Ghanaian context. According to (UNESCO, 2014), low and middle income countries could increase educational resources needed for infrastructural expansion by some US$ 153 billion which was 70% of the 2014 revenues through efficient taxation system and prudent utilisation of national resources. It has been identified that many people in the informal sector in Ghana are making appreciable income, but are yet to be hooked into the tax system due to poor national identification and database system. Therefore building a strong national database can expand the tax net and increase government revenues. The experience of Ecuador serves a good lesson in this regard. Ecuador undertook efficient tax reforms in 2003. The country widened its tax net, and renegotiated contracts with oil companies and places a higher priority on education. The results were tripling in educational expenditure between 2003 and 2010. This expanded access, quality and equity in her educational system (UNESCO, 2014).

The findings on strategies to overcome the high incidence of rural poverty which came to the fore as the major economic factor that fuels the rural-urban inequity in BE in Ghana revealed that social safety net interventions are the best option for the rural folks. The expansion of the SFP to cover all rural communities in Ghana; increment in the amount of the capitation grant
per pupil; sustainable livelihood programmes (in the form of agriculture and agro processing) to economically empower rural folks as to support education are very crucial. More significantly, it was also revealed that there were some favourable economic factors in the rural communities that can be harnessed to improve access and quality. The use of communal labour for school infrastructure projects can reduce the cost and thereby increase the coverage rate of such projects. It also increases community ownership of schools. Another significant revelation was that the annual payment of cash bonuses to cocoa farmers (which is paid in addition to the producer price) by the government can be converted into providing bicycles for the children of cocoa farmers and caretakers of cocoa farms. This can also reduce the effects of geographical inaccessibility to school attendance.

The finding on the strategies to overcome the contextual socio-cultural impediments to access to quality BE in rural Ghana, revealed that strategies like effective public campaign on the importance of girls’ education; inclusion of effective reproductive health education in the BE curriculum, the inclusion of traditional leaders in the decision making process are very relevant to the context of rural Ghana. It was further revealed that there are some favourable contextual socio-cultural factors in the rural communities that can be harnessed to improve access to quality BE. They include the high level of hospitality, the strong communal spirit, strong social bond and; the high level of reverence that is accorded traditional leaders. Rural folks in Ghana still embrace the traditional Ghanaian social value of according visitors with high level of hospitality. Strangers/visitors are viewed in traditional Ghanaian society as ‘God sent angel’ and that the extent of hospitality one extends to them equal bounces back to host. Due to this rural communities hold teachers posted into their communities in high esteem. A teacher in rural BSs in the ANM told me that he hardly buys any food stuffs because the community supplies him with most of the local food stuffs he needs free of charge. This high level of rural hospitality and the relatively low cost of living, he said, have been the motivating factors for his continuous stay. More significantly, traditional leaders, especially, local chiefs, in the rural communities are highly respected by their subjects. Among their roles include calling for communal work to undertake public projects such as the construction and cleaning of local markets, schools, public toilets and others self-help projects. Sometimes households are levied by the traditional authority toward such projects. This has been the main bait which rural communities in Ghana use to attract government support as most often the government eventually take over such development projects. Also, traditional leaders can also be used to lead the crusade for girl child education in the communities by advocating for
the elimination of all forms of cultural and gender constructed barriers to girls’ education. This can erase the low value that some of the rural folks have placed on girls’ education.

The findings on the contextual economic and socio-cultural factors and their implications on equitable access to BE in Ghana agree with the findings and the rural lens argument by Cobbold (2006), Clark and Stevens (2008), Miller (2015) and Wallace & Boylon (2009) as espoused in (2.1.1) thus: rural communities are also imbued with some peculiar economic and social-cultural dispositions which may appear unusual from urban perfective, but if properly understood can be harnessed for sustainable school transformation. It is also consistent with the findings of Tomasevski (2005) (refer to 3.2.4). She also found that strategies that specifically target rural communities with public campaign and disadvantage girls with reproductive health and sanitary programmes help to overcome the social-cultural factors that impede their education.

6.3 Implementing Relevant Strategies

This section discusses the major findings on how the relevant strategies identified should be implemented in rural Ghana so as to eliminate the rural-urban inequity in BE. A perusal of some past and ongoing strategies in ANM such as the bicycle for pupils’ project; Community Child and Gender Protection Committees programme; solar lamps programme and; the SFP revealed that proper targeting, efficient monitoring, adequate community involvement, public campaign as well as flexible and appropriate strategies maximise the outcomes in educational programmes in rural Ghana. For example, the success story of the bicycle for pupil’s project that was undertaken by Care International in the ANM in 2011 revealed the following:

a. Proper targeting: the project specifically targeted and supplied bicycles to JHS pupils in rural BSs who walk several hours to schools.

b. Participation of community level stakeholders: Teachers and opinion leaders in the communities were made to select the beneficiaries base on the distance they cover to school and their economic background. Pupils who live farthest away from the schools and come from poor rural households were prioritised.

c. Appropriateness of the technology: the bicycles were very simple and durable and were accompanied with simple tools for maintenance.
d. Efficient monitoring: Monitoring committees were formed in the beneficiary communities to ensure that the bicycles were used solely for the purpose of schooling. Adult who were found using these bicycles were fined and the monies were put in PTA project.

The findings generally suggest that given the contexts of the study District and deprive rural Ghana in general, any educational programme or strategy which is well targeted, that seeks to whip up adequate community support, and adopts the most appropriate technology with the needed flexibility in the execution process is likely to have a lasting impact on rural dwellers.

These findings are collaborated by that of Souze (2006) and Schwartzma, (2005) in their study of cash transfer programmes in South America. Their studies also revealed that the impact of cash transfer interventions are maximised when they properly target areas where poverty, remoteness, gender and social-cultural practices tend to alienate students from school. Findings from studies in African countries such as Kenya, Malawi and Zambia on SFP and abolition of fees also revealed that poor targeting, lack of consistent financial inflows and lack of locally sustainable initiatives due to donor over dependent as well as inadequate community participation have been the major bottlenecks for the lasting impact of such interventions (World Bank, 2006; 2012; UNESCO, 2015a). Study of the Tayssir CCT pilot programme in Morocco also revealed that proper targeting of poor rural family and adequate parents’ participation engendered massive increase in enrolment, re-enrolment, and attendance and achievement rates and also reduced dropout rate among pupils (Benhassine, et al., 2014). Also studies by Osei et al. (2009), Aliu & Sakara (2014), and Lynch (2013), into Ghana’ fCUBE /capitation grant policy and the SFP have all identified the issues of improper targeting, misplaced priority due to possible electoral gains, insufficient local initiatives and funding as the major weakness in the sustainable impact of these programme.

In summary, this chapter suggests that the state of equitable accessible quality BE in Ghana is modest, but not impressive due to deep seated rural-urban inequities in access and quality. These inequities are perpetuated by both pervasive contextual factors and some immediate ones that have links to the general loopholes in GoG policy strategies implementation. Also, the over generalisation and whole sale implementation of the strategies do not facilitate sustainable outcomes. The next chapter therefore seeks to offer germane recommendation with policy relevance on how to execute relevant policy strategies in tandem with the context of rural Ghana so as to bridge the rural-urban gap in BE in Ghana.
7 Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter presents the conclusions drawn from this study and also offers some recommendations. This study sought to look at educational strategies in relation to specific context. This was to understand how the different rural-urban contexts within a country pose different challenges to equitable access to quality BE. It assessed the extent of and the contextual factors for the rural–urban inequities in access and quality in BE and how GoG policy strategies have addressed them. This was to identify strategies that are relevant to the context of rural Ghana and how they can be executed in order to narrow the rural-urban gap in BE in Ghana toward the achieving the SDG (4).

7.1 Conclusions

The World Forum on Education for All (EFA) in Jomtien (1990) and Daker (2000) saw renewed global commitment toward achieving the six EFA goals. This brought on its wake massive literature and policy dissemination as rooted in the human rights-based strategies towards achieving the EFA and the MDG2 across the globe. Although tremendous progress has been made, the world failed to achieve the EFA by the 2015 timeline. Notwithstanding the comprehensiveness of these global policies toward attaining EFA, they appear too general in their approach as they focus more on global, regional and national contexts at the expense of the rural-urban dichotomy within the individual countries. The adoption, operationalization and the implementation of these strategies at the national levels also suffer from the overgeneralization based on bureaucratic urban purview. The gap in educational policy discourse that this study sought to fill, is therefore how to contextualised and execute relevant strategies in the rural milieu so as to bridge the rural-urban gap in BE which is crucial in meeting the SDG 4 target of achieving inclusive equitable quality education and life-long learning opportunities by 2030.

Rural milieu across the globe, are susceptible to dwindling socio-economic opportunities including access to quality BE due to remoteness and isolation. Global efforts of increasing equity in access and quality in BE focus on right-based strategies that make education more availability, accessibility and affordability to marginalized groups like the rural folks through
social safety cushions. Literature on Ghana suggests that her policy strategies toward her free compulsory universal BE drive mimic that of the global. It is also underpinned by the human right principle of equity which seeks to redistribute the social cost of education in favour of marginalised groups.

Although GoG policy strategies on BE appear to be relevant and in tune with the global, they are yet to adequately addressed the problem of rural-urban inequities in access to and quality in BE which is the main reason why Ghana missed most of the EFA the goals. This study found that access to and quality in BE is very much skewed in favour of urban Ghana. These inequities are orchestrated by two main groups of factors. The first group is made up of some endemic geographical, economic and socio-cultural contextual factors peculiar to rural Ghana. They are manifested in the problems of geographical inaccessibility, high rural poverty, large rural household size, and high rural illiteracy, prevalence of early and forced marriage as well as prescribed gender roles for girls among others. The second group is made up of some immediate causes that are linked to the general weakness in GoG policy implementation process coupled with the weak public administration, decentralization systems and the general level of underdevelopment. They include the lack of proper contextualization and targeting of the strategies, lack of sustainable funding; weak monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, poor implementation of the BE curriculum, low level of community participation as well as the insufficient and skewed distribution of educational resources, personnel and attention in favour of urban BSs.

7.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered as how to contextualized and execute relevant strategies in order to overcome the endemic contextual and the immediate challenges that mastermind the rural-urban inequities in access to and quality so as to unleash the potentials in the various GOG policy strategies towards achieving free compulsory universal equitable quality BE.

Overcoming the contextual Challenges

In order to overcome the challenges posed by the pervasive contextual factors that fuel the rural-urban inequities in BE so as to provide the right footing towards achieving SDG (4), it
may require two prone approaches at the policy making and implementing levels. Firstly, at the macro-level, educational policy strategies in Ghana should be fashioned to be in tune with the peculiar characteristics, challenges, needs of each district. The policy formulation and implementation processes should adequately involve the local people, encompass local knowledge and embrace the uniqueness of sense of place and culture. An effective decentralization system should be the vehicle through which BE service is delivered to people at the grassroots. This will avoid the overgeneralizations, centralization and universalization of educational challenges, strategies and targets that tend to stifle local initiatives, knowledge and content necessary for sustainable outcomes.

Secondly, policy making and implementation processes at the micro level should be given adequate rural lens so as to narrow the rural-urban gap in access to and quality in BE. The decision making and recruitment of educational professionals should be devolved to the local government unites like the DAs. This will ensure that DEE, SCs and the other staff of the DEO as well as teachers and head teachers who are imbued with adequate understanding of the peculiar context of each district are recruited to efficiently execute the policies.

**Eliminating the Immediate Challenges**

Generally, the following are the way forward on how to implement relevant strategies to overcome the immediate challenges to BE in Ghana and inject the right impetus toward the new Agenda 2030 by achieving the objectives of the ESP (2010-2020) and the SDG 4.

In order to enhance access and quality and also bridge the rural-urban gap in BE, the SFP must be expanded to cover all rural BSs in Ghana. Also, the amount of the capitation grant per pupil should be increased to at least GHS 10 per child. Furthermore, DAs should focus more on investing in sustainable livelihood programmes, especially, in agriculture and agro processing so as to increase household income and its ability to support BE. These will uproot the blockage of unaffordability to access cause by the high rural poverty.

Furthermore, bicycle for pupils programme must be explored to reduce the problem of geographical inaccessibility to access which is very common in rural Ghana. In order to sustainably fund such project in rural Ghana; the government can convert the cash bonuses that is annually paid to cocoa farmers in addition to the producer price, to the provision of
bicycles for their children, especially, the children of cocoa caretakers who mostly lived on or near the farms.

Also, for Ghana to attain rural–urban equity in BE in the medium to long term requires adequate investment in executing her ECD policy. KG and Day Care Centres should be expanded to cover as many rural communities as possible. Also, conditional cash transfer strategies tied to agriculture inputs should be explored to entice rural parents to send their young ones to these centres on regular basis so as to minimise the effect that long distance pose to access and attendance to KG in rural communities.

Also, in order to enhance access and equity through girl-child education it will require effective public campaigns on the importance of girls’ education in rural communities which tend to place more value on early marriage than girls’ education. Also, inclusion of effective reproductive health education in the BE curriculum will be very crucial in this regard.

The role of traditional leaders at the community level should be harnessed for educational improvement. They should adequately be involved in the decision making process and projects planning and implementation. They should be encouraged to lead the crusade against socio-cultural factors that militate against girls’ education in rural Ghana. The head teachers should liaise with local chiefs to mobilise local resources including communal labour for infrastructure expansion. This will reduce cost and also increase community ownerships of the schools.

In order to eliminate the problem of inadequate supply of professional teachers in rural BSs, appropriate strategies must be explored to change the compulsion method of staffing rural BSs to that of choice. In order to achieve this, in the short term, there should be the provision of additional incentives in the form of study leave and scholarships and the option for teachers to freely choose their district of choice after having served for at least five years in remote rural BS. In the medium to long term, a law should be promulgated to make it mandatory for deprived DAs to allocate certain percentage of their common fund to the District Sponsorship Programme for teacher trainee students.

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6 The District Assembly Common fund (DACF) in Ghana is a pool of resources created under Article 252 of the 1992 constitution of Ghana. It is a minimum of 7.5% of the national revenue set and shared among the 216 District Assemblies in Ghana base on approved formula by Parliament. It is the main source of resources for development at the local level.
Also, the planning and implementation of BE curriculum and teachers’ recruitment should be devolved to the DAs. This will reduce the problems of low acceptance of rural postings and the high level of teachers’ alteration in rural BSs. It will also give true meaning to the NALAP as rural BSs will be staffed with sufficient teachers who are also versed in the local culture, including the language. This will enhance quality, equity and relevance.

Generally, in order to reduce the discordance between GOG policy texts and actual implementation, there should be a holistic and well integrated approach to policy planning and implementation. The process should be all encompassing, tied to specific context and timelines with each level and personnel on the BE policy implementation structure given a clear cut roles and targets. It also requires sustainable funding through locally sustainable initiatives rather than the over-reliance of foreign aid. In order to achieve this Ghana should invest in building of a strong national identification database system. This will make it possible to identify and hook every potential tax payer, especially, those in the informal sector, onto the tax net. This will increase tax revenues and make available the needed funds for expanded access and quality.

Lastly, for GOG or any other educational interventions to make lasting impact and narrow the rural-urban gap in access to and quality in BE in Ghana it must have the following features: it must be appropriate, well-tailored, flexible, able to mobilise and whip adequate local support, incorporate local context, content and knowledge, must attuned with the needs of the rural folks and must have sufficient social safety cushions.

This study, therefore, calls for further studies on how to effectively devolve BE policy and decision making process, including budgeting and financing, recruitment and curriculum, from the central government to local level institutions (DAs) so as to harness the full gains of local context, content and knowledge for sustainable outcomes in educational strategies in Ghana.
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# Appendices

**Appendix 1 Experiences from Some Selected BE Programmes in the Asunafo North Municipality of Ghana**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Relevance and impact</th>
<th>Factors in the implementation process that contributed that level of impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle programme by Care International in 2011</td>
<td>It supplied free bicycles to some pupils in rural BSs who lived farthest away from the schools</td>
<td>Very Relevant and had very positive impact 1. It increase attendance level to school of beneficiary pupils</td>
<td>2. It was properly targeted: pupils who live farthest from the school were identified by the teachers 3. Proper monitoring: Task force were formed in the communities to ensure that the bicycles were used for the intended purpose 4. Adults who were found using this bicycle were fined by the traditional authorities. This ensured that the bicycles last for the expected span. 5. Appropriate technology: The bike were simple and durable and they were accompanied by simple tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Child and Gender Protection Committee currently ongoing</td>
<td>Watch dog’s committees formed in some of the communities by an NGO in conjunction with the Gender Ministry and MoE to protect children, particularly girls from abuses and other obnoxious socio-cultural practices such as early and forced marriages that prevent girls’ transition in education. It also seek to whip local support for girls’ education</td>
<td>Very Relevant and had positive impact 1. It increased the transition and completion rate of girls in the beneficiary communities by some level</td>
<td>1. Active involvement of members of the community 2. Effective house to house public campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solar lamps for wards of cocoa farmers by a cocoa marketing Company. 2013/2014</td>
<td>Specifically targets and supply solar lamps to wards of cocoa farmers who sell their produce to the company. These farmers live in hamlets (on farms settlement) without access to electricity</td>
<td>Very relevant and had very positive impact 1. It has reduced the rate to which pupils default in submitting take home assignment 2. It has increased the rate to which pupils prepare for lessons</td>
<td>1. It properly targeted wards of farmers who do not have access to lights 2. The lamps were cheaper to use and manage 3. They are durable hence expected to have lasting impact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| School feeding programme by GoG. | Currently ongoing programme that supply at least lunch to pupils in some selected BSs in the country. Aims at increasing enrolment and promote nutritional needs of pupils | 1. The impact has been modest  
2. It increased enrolment by some margins  
3. It somehow increases attendance  
4. The nutritional objective has not been fully achieved | 1. Irregular serving of food due to problem of funding  
2. Poor quality of food served due to funding problem has to help to achieve the nutritional objective  
3. Low coverage rate due to financial burden  
4. Low community participation  
5. Insufficient patronage of local food stuffs, especially local rice by contractors  
6. Bias in selection of school due to political and electoral considerations |
|---|---|---|---|
| Teachers’ Upgrading Programme - Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE) and Diploma in Education Distance Learning Programme by University of Cape Coast | It is currently ongoing programme that target pupils’ teachers, basically, secondary school leavers who are currently teaching in rural BSs for sandwich and distance education | **Very Relevant and had positive impact**  
1. It is reducing the number of unprofessional teachers in rural BSs  
2. It is increasing the level of teachers’ professionalism  
3. It has somehow improved the quality of teaching in the rural BSs | 1. It is very flexible as it is organised outside contact hours, mostly in weekends and during vacations |
Appendix 2 Questionnaire For Teachers

I am a master’s student of the above university conducting a study on the topic: ‘Achieving Equity in Basic Education in Ghana; Contexts and Strategies’ for my thesis. The purpose of this study is to identify and understand how the different contexts base on geographical, economic, social and cultural settings within a country pose different implications for equitable access to quality basic education. This is to identify, from the perspective of teachers, the right strategies in tandem with specific rural context, and how they can be implemented to eliminate rural-urban inequity in access and quality in basic education.

Your school and name was drawn to participate in this study. I would be grateful if you can candidly provide answers to this questionnaire. Your input is going to be at the core of this study as it will trigger recommendations for policy makers as how to enhance equity between urban and rural areas in terms of access to quality basic education. Please note that the information gathered will only be used for academic purposes and they are going to be confidential.

From the list of statements and questions tick the possible answers that reflect your views. In instances where you are asked to list, concisely state at most three (3) positions that reflect your views.

Name of school  ………………………..

Background information

1. Sex
   a. male [  ] 
   b. female [  ] 
2. Age:……………..
3. Professional qualification: .................................................................
4. Number of years in teaching service:………………
5. How long have you been working in this school?...............................
6. Which of these areas have you spent most of your life?
   a. rural [  ] 
   b. urban [  ]

The Extent of Urban-Rural Inequity in Access and Quality in Basic Education in Ghana and the Study District

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:
   i. Urban-rural inequities in access to and quality in basic education are rife in Ghana and the Asunafo North Municipality in particular?
      a. Strongly disagree [  ] 
      b. disagree [  ] 
      c. neutral [  ] 
      d. agree [  ] 
      e. strongly agree[  ]
      f. Do not know
   ii. The rural areas in Ghana are trailing the urban areas in access to and quality in basic education terms of :
a. Availability of schools
   a. Strongly disagree [ ]
   b. disagree [ ]
   c. neutral [ ]
   d. agree [ ]
   e. strongly agree [ ]
   f. Don’t know[ ]

b. Accessibility( proximity)
   a. Strongly disagree [ ]
   b. disagree [ ]
   c. neutral [ ]
   d. agree [ ]
   e. strongly agree [ ]
   f. Don’t know

c. Affordability(the extent to which households income can support education)
   a. Strongly disagree [ ]
   b. disagree [ ]
   c. neutral [ ]
   d. agree [ ]
   e. strongly agree [ ]
   f. Don’t know

d. Availability of TLMs
   a. Strongly disagree [ ]
   b. disagree [ ]
   c. neutral [ ]
   d. agree [ ]
   e. strongly agree [ ]
   f. Don’t know

e. Attendance
   a. Strongly disagree [ ]
   b. disagree [ ]
   c. neutral [ ]
   d. agree [ ]
   e. strongly agree [ ]
   f. Don’t know

f. Transition to higher secondary
   a. Strongly disagree [ ]
   b. disagree [ ]
   c. neutral [ ]
   d. agree [ ]
   e. strongly agree [ ]
   f. Don’t know

g. Completion rate
   a. Strongly disagree [ ]
   b. disagree [ ]
   c. neutral [ ]
   d. agree [ ]
   e. strongly agree [ ]
   f. Don’t know

h. Availability of better facilities
   a. Strongly disagree [ ]
(classrooms, playing grounds, toilet facilities, potable water)

a. disagree [ ]
b. neutral [ ]
c. agree [ ]
d. strongly agree[ ]
e. Don’t know

i. Availability of adequate teachers

a. Strongly disagree [ ]
b. disagree [ ]
c. neutral [ ]
d. agree [ ]
e. strongly agree[ ]
f. Don’t know

j. Retention of quality teachers

a. Strongly disagree [ ]
b. disagree [ ]
c. neutral [ ]
d. agree [ ]
e. strongly agree[ ]
f. Don’t know

Government strategies toward eliminating the urban-rural inequalities in basic education

8a. Which of these government policies / strategies on basic education are you aware off? Tick as many as you are conversant with.
   a. The free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (fCUBE) [ ]
   b. Capitation grant [ ]
   c. School feeding programme [ ]
   d. National Early Childhood Development (ECD) policy
   e. Free uniforms[ ]
   f. The Girls PASS Programme [ ]
   g. Complimentary Basic Education Programme[ ]
   h. Teachers’ Upgrading Programme - Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE) [ ]
   i. Teacher Community Assistant Initiative (TCAI)/ Pupils’ teacher programme [ ]
   j. The National Literacy Accelerated Programme (NALAP) [ ]
   k. Independent external evaluation of quality and standard by Ghana Inspectorate Board [ ]

8b. Which of these policies / strategies have actually been implemented in your school?
   a. The free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (fCUBE) [ ]
   b. Capitation grant [ ]
   c. School feeding programme (SFP) [ ]
   d. National Early Childhood Development (ECD) policy
   e. Free uniforms[ ]
   f. The Girls PASS Programme [ ]
   g. Complimentary Basic Education Programme[ ]
   h. Teachers’ Upgrading Programme - Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE) [ ]
   i. Teacher Community Assistant Initiative (TCAI) programme [ ]
   j. The National Literacy Accelerated Programme (NALAP) [ ]
k. Independent external evaluation of quality and standard by Ghana Inspectorate Board [ ]

8c. How will you rate the general impact of these strategies you have selected above, if any, on equity to accessible quality basic education?
   a. very low [ ]
   b. low [ ]
   c. neutral [ ]
   d. average
   e. high [ ]
   f. very high [ ]
   g. don’t know [ ]

8d. Base on your response to the above what accounted for (loopholes and strength) that level of impact? Outline at most three reasons.

1
2
3

8e. What capacity building have you received as regard to the implementation of those government’s programmes that your school has benefited from? Outline at most three.

1
2
3

9. A part from the above policies / strategies do you know of any other special programme(s) your school is benefiting or has benefited from. List at most three.

1
2
3

9b. What was or has been the impact? List at most three.

1
2
3

Challenges to Access and Quality in Basic Education in Rural Ghana

10. These are some of the underlining factors that perpetuate the urban-rural inequities in access to basic education in Ghana. Tick as many as you agree with.
   a. Unavailability of schools in most remote rural areas [ ]
   b. In adequate school infrastructure [ ]
c. Pupils walking long distance to and fro school [ ]

d. High incidence of rural poverty [ ]

e. High rate of rural illiteracy [ ]

f. Large rural households size

g. Inequities in distribution of educational resources and [ ]

h. None of the above [ ]

i. Don’t know [ ]

11. These are some of the underlining factors that perpetuate urban-rural inequities in quality. Tick as many as you agree with.

a. Poor facilities [ ]

b. Poor learning environment [ ]

c. Inadequate teaching and learning material(TLMs) [ ]

d. Lack of adequate number of qualified teachers [ ]

e. Lack of social amenities like electricity, potable water, internet among others [ ]

f. High alteration of teachers in rural areas [ ]

g. Inability of household income to support basic education[ ]

h. Inability to adopt schooling to learner’s environment[ ]

i. rigid school time tabling which does not facilitates child centred learning[ ]

j. None of the above[ ]

k. Don’t know[ ]

Contextual factors that affect access and quality in basic education in rural Ghana

12. How available (enough number of schools) is basic schools to the catchment area of your school?

a. Scantly available [ ]

b. somehow available [ ]

c. neutral [ ]

d. available [ ]

e. very available

f. Don’t know [ ]

13. How accessible (proximity) is basic schools to the catchment area of your school?

a. Not accessible

b. somehow accessible [ ]

c. neutral [ ]

d. accessible [ ]

e. very accessible [ ]

f. Don’t know [ ]

14. How will you describe the availability of teaching and materials in the school?

a. Not available learning[ ]

b. scantly available [ ]

c. don’t know [ ]

d. available [ ]

e. readily available [ ]

f. Don’t know [ ]

15. How will you rate the conduciveness of the school’s environment (including facilities) for teaching and learning?

a. Not conducive [ ]

b. Somewhat conducive [ ]

c. Conducive [ ]
16. How will you describe your working conditions?
   a. Very poor [ ]
   b. Poor [ ]
   c. Neutral [ ]
   d. Good [ ]
   e. Very good [ ]

17. How will you describe your living conditions?
   a. unsatisfied [ ]
   b. Somewhat unsatisfied[ ]
   c. Neutral [ ]
   d. Somehow satisfied [ ]
   e. Satisfied [ ]
   f. Very satisfied [ ]

18. How long do you wish to stay at your current post? .......year(s)

19. What incentives can lure you to either accept or continue to teach in a rural school for long relatively long time?
   1
   2
   3

20. How many in-service training have you received in the past two years?
   a. None [ ]
   b. 1-2 [ ]
   c. 3-4 [ ]
   d. 4+ [ ]
   e. Neutral [ ]

21. How flexible is the school's time table vis a vis the school curriculum?
   a. Very flexible [ ]
   b. Somehow flexible [ ]
   c. Flexible [ ]
   d. Neutral [ ]
   e. Not flexible [ ]
   f. Don’t know [ ]

22. How relevant is the basic school curriculum to the context of the community?
   a. Very relevant [ ]
   b. Somehow relevant [ ]
   c. Relevant [ ]
   d. Neutral [ ]
   e. Not relevant [ ]
   f. Don’t know [ ]

23. To what extent do the community place value on education?
24. What is the level of parent’s involvements in school?
   a. Very low [ ]
   b. somehow low [ ]
   c. Neural [ ]
   d. low [ ]
   e. very low [ ]
   f. Don’t know [ ]

25. What is the level of community participation in the school?
   a. Very low [ ]
   b. somehow low [ ]
   c. Neutral [ ]
   d. high [ ]
   e. very high [ ]
   f. Don’t know [ ]

26. What extent does household income supports the fCUBE programme in the community?
   a. Very low [ ]
   b. Low [ ]
   c. Average [ ]
   d. Neutral [ ]
   e. High [ ]
   f. Very high [ ]
   g. Do not know [ ]

27. Mention if any, at most three major geographical factors that hinders access to quality basic education the community.
   1
   2
   3

27b. What strategies can minimise the negative geographical effects on access to quality basic education in the community?
   1
   2
   3

27c. Identify, at most, three geographical factors that favour or can be harnessed to enhance access to quality of basic education in the community?
   1
28. Mention if any, at most, three major economic factors that hinder access to quality basic education in the community.

29b. What strategies can minimise the effects of the negative economic factors you have listed above on access to quality basic education in the community?

29c. Identify, at most, three major economic factors that favour or can be harnessed to enhance access to quality of basic education in the community?

30b. Mention if any, at most, three major socio-cultural and factors that hinder access to quality basic education the community?

30c. What strategies can minimise the effects of the negative socio-cultural factors that affect quality to basic education in the community you mentioned?
30c. Identify, at most, three major socio-cultural factors that favour or can be harnessed to enhance access to quality of basic education in the community?

1.

2.

3.

**Contextualisation of strategies to enhance rural–urban equity in access and quality**

31. To what extend do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

a. Privatising the monitoring and evaluation aspect of basic education management will improve quality.
   
a. Strongly disagree [ ]
   b. disagree [ ]
   c. neutral [ ]
   d. Agree [ ]
   e. strongly agree [ ]
   f. Don’t know [ ]

b. Decentralisation of curricular to reflect local content or contexts will improve quality and equity.
   
a. Strongly disagree [ ]
   b. disagree [ ]
   c. neutral [ ]
   d. agree [ ]
   e. strongly agree [ ]
   f. don’t know [ ]

c. Recruiting teachers from within the District will enhance retention of quality teachers and also improve quality and relevance
   
a. Strongly disagree [ ]
   b. disagree [ ]
   c. neutral [ ]
   d. agree [ ]
   e. strongly agree [ ]
   f. don’t know [ ]

d. Promoting the use of mother-tongue instruction at the KG and lower primary levels will enhance quality in rural basic schools.
   
a. Strongly disagree [ ]
   b. disagree [ ]
   c. neutral [ ]
   d. agree [ ]
   e. strongly agree [ ]
   f. Don’t know [ ]

e. Recruiting teachers from within the District give meaning to the mother -tongue policy for the KG and lower primary levels if basic education in Ghana.
   
a. Strongly disagree [ ]
   b. disagree [ ]
   c. neutral [ ]
   d. agree [ ]
   e. strongly agree [ ]
   f. don’t know [ ]
f. Increasing community participation in school management improves quality.
   a. Strongly disagree [  ]
   b. Disagree [  ]
   c. neutral [  ]
   d. agree [  ]
   e. strongly agree [  ]
   f. Don’t know [  ]

g. Incentives for teachers in rural areas will attract and maintain quality teachers in rural areas of Ghana.
   a. Strongly disagree [  ]
   b. Disagree [  ]
   c. Neutral [  ]
   d. Agree [  ]
   e. strongly agree [  ]
   f. Don’t know [  ]

h. Social intervention strategies / programmes can increase access and equity if it is tailored to the specific context of beneficiary communities.
   a. Strongly disagree [  ]
   b. disagree [  ]
   c. neutral [  ]
   d. agree [  ]
   e. strongly agree [  ]
   f. Don’t know [  ]

i. Promoting early childhood education can be the starting point for equity between urban and rural basic schools.
   a. Strongly disagree [  ]
   b. disagree [  ]
   c. neutral [  ]
   d. agree [  ]
   e. strongly agree [  ]
   f. don’t know [  ]

j. Promoting girls education can increase equity in access in basic education.
   a. Strongly disagree [  ]
   b. disagree [  ]
   c. neutral [  ]
   d. agree [  ]
   e. strongly agree [  ]
   f. don’t know [  ]

k. Bridging distance between rural pupils and their schools can increase rural-urban equity in access to basic schools.
   a. Strongly disagree [  ]
   b. disagree [  ]
   c. neutral [  ]
   d. agree [  ]
   e. strongly agree [  ]
   f. don’t know [  ]

Thank you very much for participating in this study. If you wish to know the results of my study you can contact me on the following;
Appendix 3 Questionnaire for Head Teachers of Basic Schools

I am a master’s student of the above university conducting a study into the topic: ‘Achieving Equity in Basic Education in Ghana; Contexts and Strategies’ for my thesis. The purpose of this study is to identify and understand how the different contexts base on geographical, economic, social and cultural settings within a country pose different implications for equitable access to quality basic education. This is to identify, from the perspective of teachers, the right strategies in tandem with specific rural context, and how they can be implemented to eliminate rural-urban inequity in access and quality in basic education.

Your school and name was drawn to participate in this study. I would be grateful if you can candidly provide answers to this questionnaire. Your input is going to be at the core of this study as it will trigger recommendations for policy makers as how to enhance equity between urban and rural areas in terms of access to quality basic education. Please note that the information gathered here will only be used for academic purposes and they are going to be confidential.

From the list of statements and questions tick the possible answers that reflect your position and views. In instances where you are asked to list, concisely state at most three positions that reflect your views.

Access

1. How will you describe the general level of access to basic education in the locality of the school?
   a. Very high
   b. High
   c. Average
   d. Low
   e. Very low
   f. Neutral
   g. Don’t know

2. How will you describe the problem of out –of- school children in the area?
   a. Very high
   b. High
   c. Neutral
   d. Low
   e. Very low

1. What are some of the common reasons for drop- outs and low attendance in the locality?
   a.
   b.
   c.

2. How will you describe the problem of absenteeism among pupils in the community?
   a. very low [ ]
   b. low [ ]
   c. neutral[ ]
d. high [ ]
e. Don’t know [ ]

How affordable is basic education to the community

a. Not Affordable
b. Somehow affordable
c. Neutral
d. Affordable
e. Very affordable
f. Don’t know

3. What are some of the common reasons for low attendance in the locality?
   1
   2
   3

6. Mention some of the general of access in your school and the community.
   1
   2
   3

7. What percentage of the pupils in the school commute more than 5km to and fro school on foot?
   a. Less than 5% [ ]
   b. 6% - 10% [ ]
   c. 11 – 15% [ ]
   d. 16 – 20% [ ]
   e. Over 20% [ ]
   f. Don’t know [ ]

Quality

8. How will you described the general level of quality in basic education in the community?
   a. High
   b. Average
   c. Neutral
   d. Low

9. Mention some of the general problems that hinder quality in your school.
   1
   2
   3
10. How will you describe the general attitude and commitment level to work of the teachers in your school?
   a. Very negative
   b. Negative
   c. Neutral
   d. Positive
   e. Very positive

11. How will you describe the level of punctuality of teachers in the school?
   a. Very negative
   b. Negative
   c. Neutral
   d. Positive
   e. Very positive

12. How will you rate the professionalism of your teachers?
   a. Very professional
   b. Somewhat
   c. Neutral
   d. Somewhat unprofessional
   e. Very un-professional

13. Name factors that prevent maximum output of the teachers in your school?
   1
   2
   3

14. How will you describe the state of infrastructure in the school?
   a. Very good
   b. good
   c. Neutral
   d. Poor
   e. Very poor
   f. Do not know

15. How will you describe the timely release of capitation grant to your school?
   a. Not regular
   b. somehow regular
   c. Neutral
   d. regular
   e. Very regular

16. Is the amount of grant given per child sufficient enough to address the issue of affordability to basic education in your locality?
   a. Yes [ ]
   b. No [ ]

17. Is the amount sufficient to enhance quality?
   a. Yes [ ]
   b. No [ ]
18. How much will you prescribe per a child per a term base on the conditions of your locality? GSH …………….. 

19. How active is the PTA in the school?.
   a. Very active
   b. Active
   c. Neutral
   d. Inactive
   e. Very much inactive

20. What ways has the PTA supported your school?
   1

   2

   3

21. What has been the impact of PTA and community support to the school?
   a. Very positive
   b. Positive
   c. Neutral
   d. Not positive
   e. Negative

22. How will you describe the gap between the intended curriculum (curricular as exist in texts), the implemented curriculum (what teachers are able to teach given available time and resources) and the attained curriculum (what children are able to learn) in your school
   a. No gap
   b. Small gap
   c. neutral
   d. Wide gap
   e. Very wide gap
   f. Don’t know

23. How will you rate the level of supervision by the circuit supervisor/DEO?
   a. very weak
   b. weak
   c. neutral
   d. strong
   e. Very strong
   f. Don’t know

24. How will you describe the overall performance of spur pupils in examinations?
   a. Excellent
   b. Very good
   c. Good
   d. Average
   e. Neutral
   f. Poor
   g. Very poor
Contextual of Strategies to enhance access and quality in basic education in the study district

25. Are there any special programmes by government and NGO that your school is benefiting or have benefited from? Comment on its impact, the loopholes and how you think the programmes ought to be / to have been implemented to maximise outcome. Follow the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme Name</th>
<th>Relevance and Impact</th>
<th>Factors in the implementation process that led to level of impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


26. In which areas would your school prefer immediate assistant?

1

2

3

27. Given the specific context of the catchment area of your school, mention some programmes and strategies that can bridge the rural-urban gap in access

1

2

3

28. Suggest ways by which the strategies listed above can be implemented in the community.

1

2

3

29. Given the specific context of the locality, mention some programmes/strategies that can bridge the rural-urban gap in quality.

1

2

3

30. Suggest ways by which the strategies listed above can be implemented in the locality.

1

2

3

31. How will you describe the overall performance of spur pupils in examinations?
   a. Excellent
   b. Very good
   c. Good
   d. Average
   e. Neutral
   f. Poor
   g. Very poor

Thank you very much for participating in this study. If you wish to know the results of my study you can contact me on the following;
Appendix 4 Guide to gathering Secondary Data from the Asunafo North Municipal Education Office

1. Total number of teachers in the District -------- Trained --------
   Untrained.............

2. Total Number of teachers in each circuit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circuit</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Total Number of teachers in the two main urban towns of Mim and Goaso townships alone:
   Total -------- Trained----------- Untrained..................

4. Pupil- classroom ratio in the District ------------

5. Pupils- teachers’ ratio .........................

6. Pupils trained teacher ratio.....................

7. Average number of drop outs for the entire District for five academic years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Total pupils’ population</th>
<th>Number of drop outs</th>
<th>Percentage of total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. **Average number of dropouts per circuit for 2014/15 academic year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circuit</th>
<th>Total population</th>
<th>Number of drop outs</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. **Average number of girls who dropped out of school due to pregnancy or early marriage per academic year.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Total population</th>
<th>Number of drop outs</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. **Average number of girls who dropped out of school due to pregnancy or early marriage per circuit for the 2014/15 academic year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circuit</th>
<th>Total population</th>
<th>Number of drop outs</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Circuit</th>
<th>Total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 5 Guide to gathering Secondary Data from Ten selected Basic School in the Study District

Name of School: Setting/Location: Rural [ ] Urban [ ]

Access

1. The school is attached with KG. Yes [ ] No [ ]
2. New Enrolments at first grade for the 2013/2014 academic year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrolment</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3. Total attendance for third term of 2014/15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Total population per class</th>
<th>Total attendance for Boys</th>
<th>Total attendance for Boys Girls</th>
<th>number of days school opened</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Or

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Total population per class</th>
<th>Total attendance for Boys</th>
<th>Total attendance for Boys Girls</th>
<th>number of days school opened</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JHS1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JHS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JHS</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>JHS</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>JHS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Total number of students who dropped out from school during the 2014/15 academic year..................

Attendance VS Distance

5. Comparison of attendance of two students from any class (a pupil who lives closer to school vs a pupil who lives farthest (5km and more) from the school)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil</th>
<th>Total attendance in 3rd third term of 2014/15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupil closer to the school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil farther from the school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of times school opened</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Quality: inputs and process**

6. Number and characteristics of teachers in the school:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professionally Trained</th>
<th>Untrained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indigenous</th>
<th>None indigenous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of years in teaching</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11yrs+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 years and less</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers who resides in the village where the school is sited</th>
<th>Teachers do not live in the village where the school is sited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Total number of classrooms unites ……………………

8. Total number of desks (or a pair of table and chair) ……………………………

9. Total number of toilet facility……….. The state of toilet facility a. good b. bad

10. Availability of water facility ………… The state of water supply a. good b. bad

11. Safety of the school environment. a. good b. bad

12. The state of playing grounds. a. good b. bad

13. Adequacy of number of core text books

| Book            | |
|-----------------||
| English         | |
| Mathematics     | |
| Science         | |
| Ghanaian Language | |

The school has access to good sanitary/toilet facilities Yes [ ] No [ ]
The School is located in conducive environment. Yes [ ] No [ ]
## Appendix 6  Field Visit Plan for Data Gathering

**Site:** Basic Schools and the Education Office in the Asunofo North Municipality of Ghana  
**Duration:** 21.09.2015 to 30.10.2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Week 1 | Visit to the ANM Education Office in Goaso - the District Capital | 1. Request for an introductory letter to enable me visit the schools  
2. Request/ search for secondary data on indicators for access, quality and equity such as: pupils-teacher ratio, pupils-classroom ration, pupils-core text books ratio, drop outs, enrolments, attendance and performance in the BECE in the District, especially how the figures differ from rural and urban basic schools |
| | Visit to 5 basic Schools in zone 6 | 1. Gathering of secondary data from five the schools in zone 6 (urban basic schools) on indicators for access and quality. They will include data on enrolment, attendance, number and qualification of teachers, core textbooks, distance the pupils commute to and fro school vs attendance, facilities in the schools. The sources will include the school register and continuous assessment forms of pupils among others  
2. Administering questionnaire to five teachers (including the head teacher) each from the 5 BSs |
| Week 2 | Visit to 5 basic School in zone 1 | 1. Administering questionnaire to five teachers (including the head teacher) each from the 5 BSs  
2. Gathering of secondary data from at least one school in zone 1. The data will focus on indicators for access and quality. They will include data on enrolment, attendance, number and qualification of teacher core textbooks; distances pupils commute to and fro school vs attendance, facilities in the schools among others. The Sources as will include school register and continuous assessment forms of pupils and other documents in the schools |
| Week 3 | Visit to 5 basic schools in zone 2 | 1. Administering questionnaire to selected teachers (including the head teacher) each from the 5 BSs  
2. Gathering of secondary data from at least one school in zone 2. The data will focus on indicators for access and quality. They will include data on enrolment, attendance, number and qualification of teacher core textbooks; distances pupils commute to and fro school vs attendance, facilities in the schools among others. The Sources as will include school register and continuous assessment forms of pupils and other documents in the schools |
| Week 4 | Visit to 5 basic School zone 3 | 1. Administering questionnaire to selected teachers (including the head teacher) each from the 5 BSs  
2. Gathering of secondary data from at least one school in zone 3. The data will focus on indicators for access and quality. They will include data on enrolment, attendance, number and qualification of teacher core textbooks; distances pupils commute to and fro school vs attendance, facilities in the schools among others. The Sources as will include school register and continuous assessment forms of pupils and other documents in the schools |
| Week five | Visit to 5 basic School in zone 4 | 1. Administering questionnaire to selected teachers (including the head teacher) each from the 5 BSs  
2. Gathering of secondary data from at least one school in zone 4. The data will focus on indicators for access and quality. They will include data on enrolment, attendance, number and qualification of teacher core textbooks; distances pupils commute to and fro school vs attendance, facilities in the schools among others. The sources include school register and continuous assessment forms of pupils and other documents in the schools |
| Week six | Visit to 5 basic School in zone 5 | 1. Administering questionnaire to selected teachers (including the head teacher) each from the 5 BSs  
2. Gathering of secondary data from at least one school in zone 5. The data will focus on indicators for access and quality. They will include data on enrolment, attendance, number and qualification of teacher core textbooks; distances pupils commute to and fro school vs attendance, facilities in the schools among others. The sources include school register and continuous assessment forms of pupils and other documents in the schools |