



GOVERNMENT COMMITTED TO SUSTAINING SIGNIFICANT GAINS IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Ghana has achieved significant progress on the economic front. Latest data on per capita income from the International Monetary Fund (IMF, World Economic Outlook, 2016) puts Ghana's GDP per capita in current terms in the year 2015 at US\$1,340.4. This represents 5.9% increase over the 2008 figure of US\$1,266.1.

Our current per capita income is also higher than that of Cote d'Ivoire (US\$1,314.7), Senegal (US\$913.0) and Kenya (US\$1,338.5).

This notwithstanding, President Mahama's government takes the position that mere economic growth and its associated indicators are necessary but not sufficient measurements of human well-being. We believe Human development is a more encompassing and comprehensive way to conceptualise development as it puts people first. In this light government acknowledges the gains made over the last few years in major human development indicators.

Ghana achieved the Millennium Development Goal 1 target of reducing the proportion of poor people by half by 2015 in 2013- a clear two years ahead of the deadline. A recent World Bank study, "Poverty Reduction in Ghana: Progress and Challenges" supports this.

Beyond the above, other recognised benchmarks show significant improvements owing largely to the unprecedented investments into critical sectors such as health, education, water provision among others.

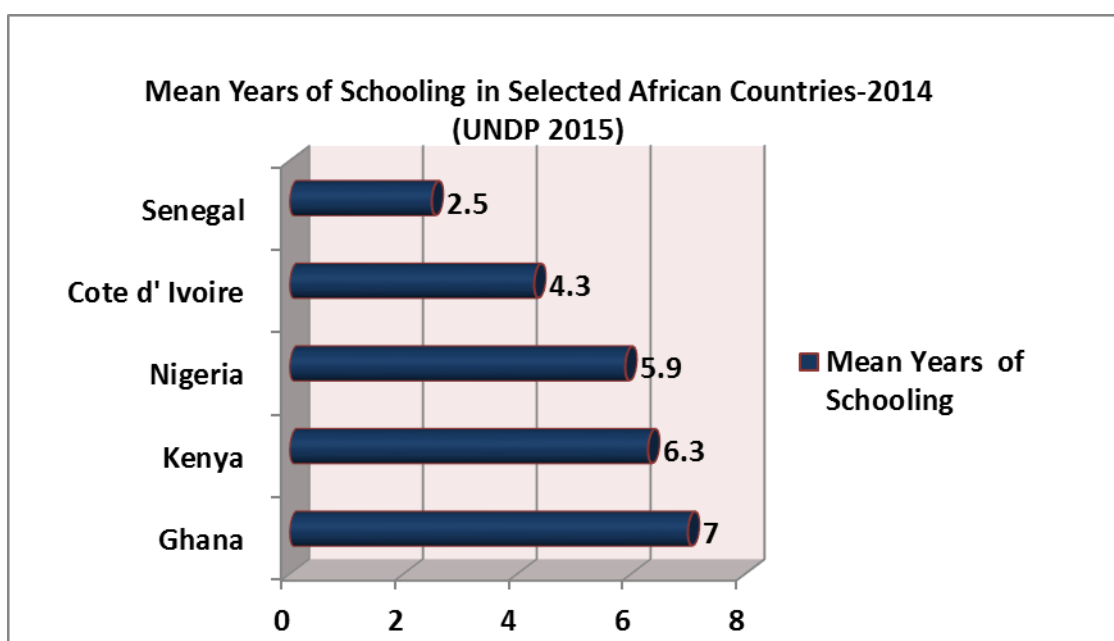
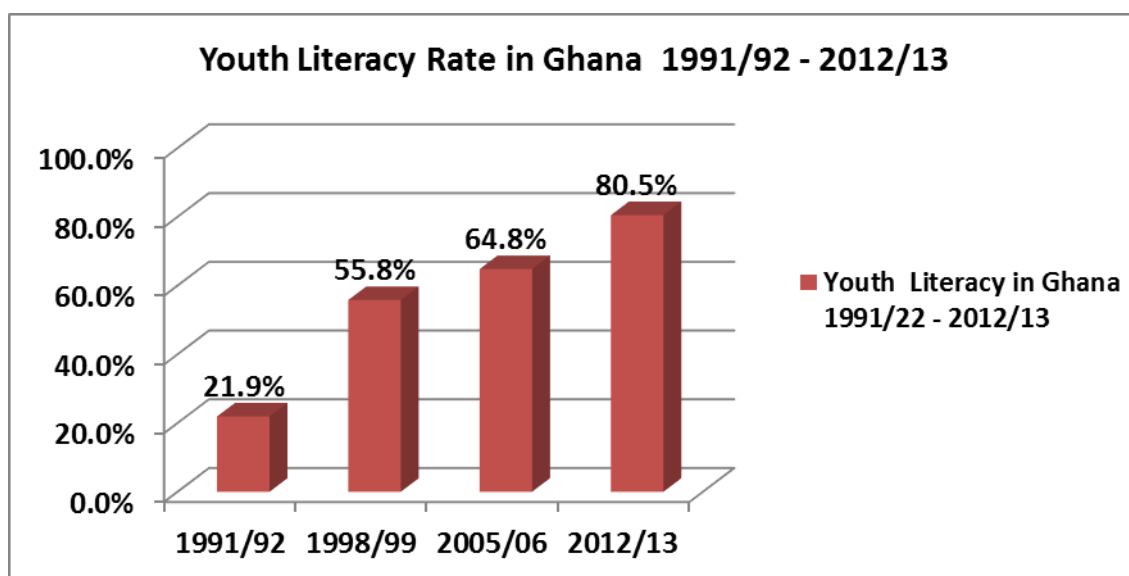
EDUCATION

Generally, Ghana's education system ranks among the best on the African Continent. The University of Ghana was recently ranked the 7th best University in Africa by the Times Higher Education. According to the UNDP (2015), Ghana's mean years in school (7.0 years) is higher and better than that



of Kenya (6.3 years), Nigeria (5.9 years), Cote d'Ivoire (4.3 years) and Senegal (2.5 years).

Improvement has also been reported in the Adult Literacy rate which increased from 50.7% in the year 2008 to 76.6% in 2015. More impressive is the trend in Youth Literacy which more than doubled between 1991/92 and 1998/99, from 21.9% to 55.8%. Thereafter a further increase to 64.8% was reported in 2005/06 before it took a quantum leap to 80.5% in 2012/2013.





Ghana has the highest school enrolment rate in West Africa with over 90% of eligible school children currently in school. As of the 2014/15 academic year a total of **9,202,894** pupils/students were enrolled in **57,293** education institutions from the Kindergarten stage to Tertiary level. This represents an increase of **2,164,156** or **30.74%** over enrolment in the 2008/9 academic year.

Important benchmarks such as gender parity and completion rates are also improving. Gender parity which measures the ratio of girls to boys currently stands at **0.96** at the primary level and **0.91** at the JHS level; compared to **0.92** and **0.85** respectively in the 2008/9 academic year.

As far as completion rates are concerned, **99.6%** of pupils enrolled at the primary school level complete while **73.5%** of JHS students complete, up from **66%** in 2008/9 academic year.

The improvements observed in the indices above are as a result of prudent and strategic investments into social infrastructure and support systems actively pursued by government. From the end of 2008, Ghana has expanded the School Feeding Programme from **441,189** pupils to **1,693,000**. The programme which began with a grant from the Netherlands government is now fully funded by the Government of Ghana.

This policy supported by vigorous expansion in school infrastructure such as completing and replacing 1,614 “schools under trees” since 2009 and the supply of teaching and learning materials nationwide underlie the increasing enrolment and retention rates at the basic level from 2009.

At the secondary level, the rolling out of programmes such as the Secondary Education Improvement Programme (expanding and improving the quality of 125 additional senior high schools in deprived communities), commencement of the progressively free secondary education policy in September 2015, the ongoing provision of scholarships for over 10,400 needy but brilliant students, as well as incentives to keep Ghanaian girls in senior high school have played a major role in expanding access and quality since 2009.



Specific interventions in various departments and schools apart from improving access have also enhanced research, teaching and learning on various campuses. Some of the notable examples are the new Laboratories for the Petroleum Engineering Department of KNUST and the Engineering departments of the Polytechnics in Takoradi and Ho among others. The new ultramodern edifice for the Hospitality, Catering and Management Institute at the Sunyani Polytechnic and the new Engineering Faculty building at Koforidua Polytechnic are also part of the numerous contributory factors driving the gains made so far in the tertiary education sub sector.

New universities- University of Health and Allied Sciences (UHAS) and the University of Energy and Natural Resources- have also been opened in the Volta and the Brong Ahafo regions respectively and are being supported aggressively to expand their reach.

Teacher Education

Government's assessment of the Teacher Education landscape revealed a number of problems that hindered the attainment of critical goals necessary for quality education. First, we noticed the glaring inequities in terms of the level of training. Ghana had two streams of teachers being trained.

Those trained in Universities such as University of Cape Coast, University of Education, Winneba among others and those trained in what we used to call Teacher Training Colleges. This led to disparities in the certificates obtained from the two different sets of institutions for graduates who essentially were expected to perform the same task – impart knowledge unto the Ghanaian pupil/student.

Government converted all the 38 existing Teacher Training Colleges into tertiary institutions, The Colleges of Education, to make them degree-awarding institutions.

The second challenge diagnosed was the inequity in funding Teacher Education. Whereas students at the University of Education Winneba (UEW) and the University of Cape Coast (UCC) etc. also being trained as teachers



relied on students' loans to support their education, those in the erstwhile Teacher Training Colleges were given monthly allowances.

The cost implications for the National budget over the years, compelled governments to scale down the number of students the Colleges of Education could admit in a year through the imposition of an obnoxious quota system. This system meant that even highly qualified SHS graduates willing and able to enrol as teacher trainees were denied access because the Colleges of Education could not admit them. The obnoxious and discriminatory "quota system" had definitely and permanently become a binding constraint.

Government discovered that some Teacher Training Colleges were in fact operating at less than 40% of their full capacity while thousands of eligible students were denied access, (they literally sat at home). There was the need for a government to act decisively in order to redress this unjust and unfair imbalance.

Government therefore **swapped** the teacher trainee allowance with the Student Loan Scheme operated by the Students Loan Trust.

In this swap process we first ensured that continuing students were not affected by the new policy. Implementation began with fresh students. So far, thousands of students in our Colleges of Education have since accessed the students loan to finance their education.

Secondly, we maintained the feeding grants for Colleges of Education making them the only tertiary institutions where feeding is provided. In March this year, government released an amount of **GHC62.7 million** to cater for the feeding of students in all Colleges of Education.

Thirdly, we have pumped significant resources into providing the Colleges of Education with additional infrastructure to position them to live up to their new designation as tertiary institutions and also to expand access.

There are currently 128 different projects including Lecture halls, dining halls, large-capacity auditoriums, bungalows, libraries, student's hostels,



administrative blocks, staff flats, ICT blocks and facilities among others either completed or on-going at various Colleges of Education.

These include – Bimbilla E.P, Abetifi Presby, Accra, Dambai, Atebubu, Agogo, St Joseph, S.D.A., St Monica's, Komenda, Holy Child, St. John Bosco, N.J.A, Amedzope E.P, St. Theresa's, Bagabaga, Enchi, Wiawso, Akatsi, Aburi Presby Women's, Jasikan, Kibi, Tumu, Peki, Ada and Our Lady of Apostles Colleges of Education among many others.

Increased Teacher Trainee Enrolment

Teacher trainee enrolment in the Colleges of Education has increased astronomically by a **whopping 63%** since the swap of the allowance with the Students Loan Scheme. This means that 63% more Ghanaian students have been given an opportunity to pursue their dream of becoming teachers. This would have been impossible had we not carried out these necessary reforms.

This feat is the most glaring testimony yet that we took the right decision in the interest of the nation and in the interest of the future of all the millions of students who would have been left behind and denied a fundamental right to education because of barriers that had been imposed through the unfair and obnoxious quota policy.

It also belies the narrative of those who seek to exploit these very reforms for partisan gain. To this end government once again commits to separating policies and measures that will secure our collective future from hollow rhetoric hastily devised to reap undeserved political capital.

Government takes the view that nation building requires decisions that can stand the test of time and benefit society in the medium to long term.

Pro-Teachers Policies

Our commitment to enhancing the circumstances of teachers and providing a congenial atmosphere for them to train our young people continues to soar. We have over the years been taking a number of pro-teacher measures aimed



at boosting the image of the profession and making it more fulfilling and rewarding.

Some of the measures and gains are as follows:

- Introduction of the 75-million-pound Transforming Teacher Education and Limited Learning Programme (T-TEL) under which 20,000 teaching and learning materials and over 20 workshops with up to 2,000 technological devices are being provided;
- A Challenge Fund has also been set up under T-TEL to promote and reward Colleges of Education that adopt innovative approaches to their work;
- 60,000 teachers representing 56% of teachers at the Basic Education level have received career development training;
- Another 7,500 teachers are benefitting from in-service training and capacity building programmes in line with the objective of improving the teaching of mathematics and science and
- Hundreds of teachers' bungalows have been provided by Government at all levels of education including 23 out of the 123 Community Day SHS which are at various stages of implementation.

As a Social Democratic government, our pact with workers including teachers and health workers remains a cherished and respected covenant. We always strive to work towards full attainment of its deliverables notwithstanding the challenges of today which has already begun giving way to a brighter tomorrow.

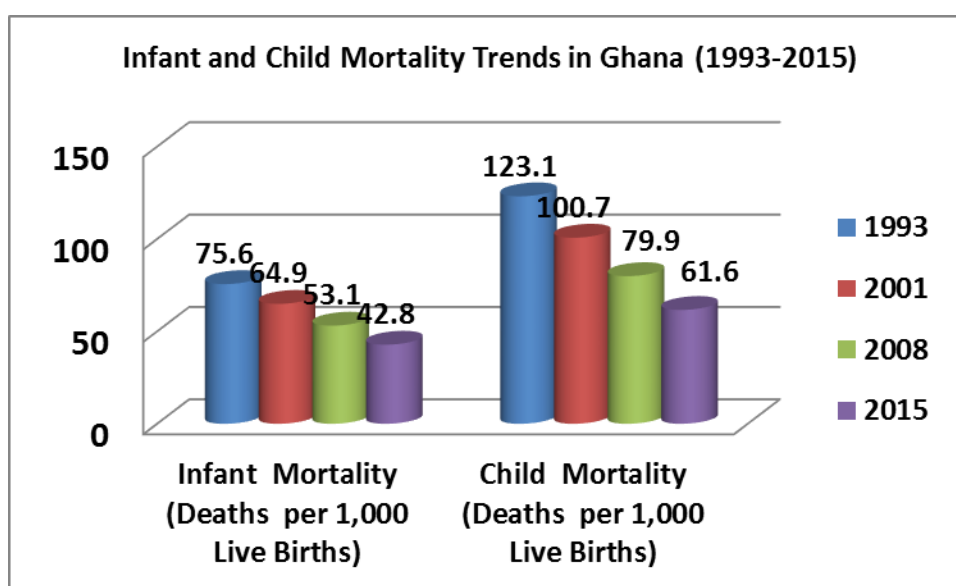
HEALTH

Today Ghanaians are living longer and healthier lives than any other period in our history. Ghana's life expectancy at birth increased from 56 years in 1990 to



58 and 60 years in 2000 and 2008 respectively (World Bank, 2015; World Health Organisation, 2016). By 2013 it had risen, by three years, to 63 years. Ghana's current life expectancy at birth is higher than Nigeria (55 years), Cote d'Ivoire (51.5 years) as well as the sub-Sahara Africa average (56.8 years). By these statistics Ghanaians on the average, live longer than their other West African counterparts.

Infant, and child mortality trends have all aligned with the improved life expectancy trends.



Source: World Health Organisation (2016). Global health observatory data repository, www.who.int/gho/database/en

These figures coupled with declining trends in maternal mortality point to the immutable fact that we are saving more children from death at birth and more are living to see their first and fifth birth days while fewer women are dying from child birth. They also show more Ghanaians are living beyond their pension age. We are working to consolidate and improve on the gains made.

Investments in the Health Sector

Health facilities continue to be expanded and their numbers also continue to increase hence the welcome improvements observed in the health of Ghanaians.



With investments totalling over **US\$2billion** by Government, Ghana is set to increase the availability of hospital beds by **6,000**. As of 2014, total hospital beds available in Ghana stood at 19,907 with government facilities accounting for 11,689 while the private sector and quasi-government health institutions provided the remaining.

Currently on-going is a programme under which several major hospital projects including the University of Ghana Teaching Hospital, the Ridge Hospital and the Police Hospital are being worked on to ensure that **by 2018 an additional 6,000 hospital beds are made available**.

Other interventions in the health sector include the construction of 1,260 CHPS compounds with government and donor resources. Polyclinics in Nkrankwanta, Wamfie, Kwatire, Tachimantia and Bomaa as well as the **US\$264million** National Medical Equipment Replacement Programme, just to state a few.

These physical interventions in infrastructure coupled with prudent policies, better immunisation/vaccination initiatives, and increased government subvention to the National Health Insurance Scheme, from **GHC183 million in 2008 to over GHC1 billion in 2014**, have contributed to improve physical access and reduced the economic burden associated with seeking health care in Ghana. The invaluable contribution of health workers is continually appreciated.

SOCIAL PROTECTION AND INTERVENTIONS

Government continues to invest heavily to improve the coverage and content of existing social welfare programmes while rolling out new social interventions to assist vulnerable groups in our society. The under listed are but a few examples.

Over the years the following have been done:

- Guinea worm was still prevalent in Ghana. The NDC government has completely dealt with the canker;



- 441,189 Ghanaian children in public basic schools benefitted from the school feeding programme in 2008. Today about 1.7 million children are on the programme without donor support as pertained previously;
- 1,654 households benefitted from LEAP in 2008. Today there are 144,000 beneficiary households.
- The introduction of the EBAN card has enabled 10,000 elderly citizens to access priority services in public institutions including a rebate on Metro Mass buses.
- Four (4) Ghanaian pupils shared one core textbook previously. Today one (1) pupil has four (4) core text books;
- Exercise books were beyond the reach of many school children. Since 2010 over 100 million exercise books have been distributed;
- School uniforms were beyond the reach of many school children. Since 2010, over 2million have been shared.

CONCLUSION

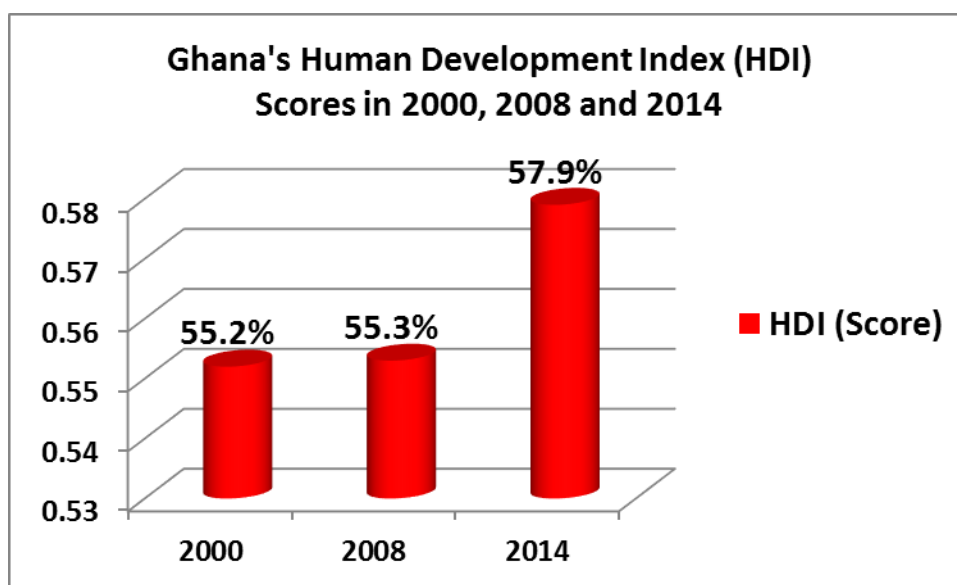
It is clear from the facts stated that, in various facets of our national life, Ghana is making significant strides, ***“and moving in the right direction with reasonable speed”- President Mahama***. This palpable and real progress collectively achieved and backed by credible, multiple indicators from reputable and independent sources, speaks authoritatively to the quality and authenticity of the gains made.

Indeed, government’s huge investment in social welfare programmes and social infrastructure and our ‘people centred’ development policies and interventions since 2009 have not gone unnoticed. In the most recent United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Report in

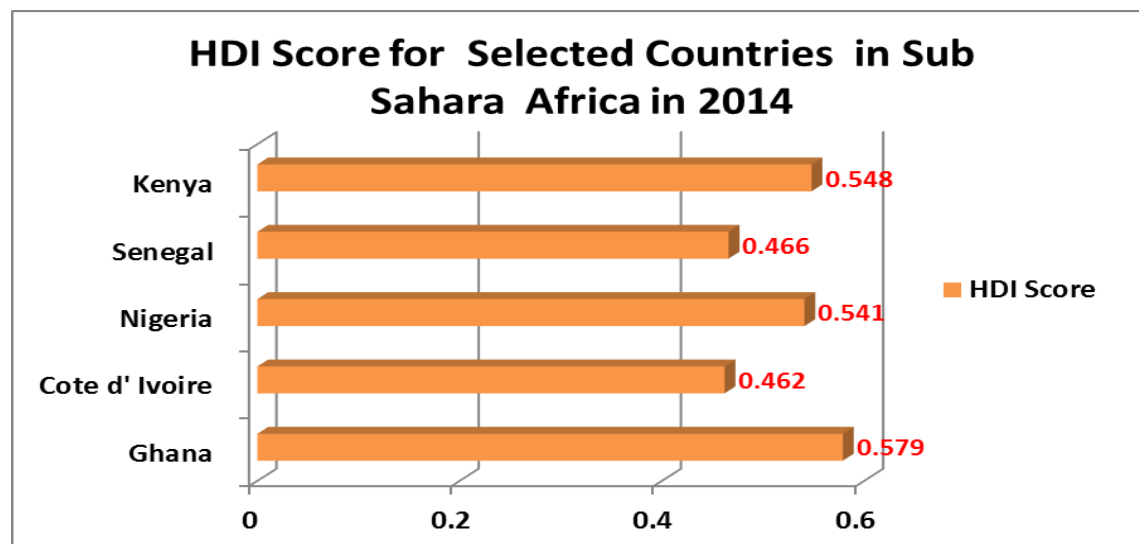


2015, Ghana was placed in the Medium Human Development category with a score (0.579) higher than Nigeria (0.514), Kenya (0.548), Senegal (0.466) and Cote d'Ivoire (0.462) who were all co-signed to the Low Human Development category by their respective scores.

Ghana's score in 2000 and 2008 were 0.552 (55.2%) and 0.553 (55.3%) respectively lower than 0.579 (57.9%) (UNDP, 2015; UNDP, 2008). Our 2014 score remains the highest in the history of this country.



Ghana's current score of 0.579 (57.9%) is ahead of all its West African neighbours except for Cape Verde. The index which is a composite of indicators consisting of health status, educational attainment (social development) coupled with per capita income (economic performance) remains one of the most credible if not the most credible measure for human development across countries and regions worldwide.





President Mahama's Government is encouraged by these positive developments and deems it as a call to do even more to bring further improvements in the lives and well-being of all Ghanaians. We shall continue to pursue "The Agenda for Transformation" to change more lives and transform Ghana.

Government, under the leadership of President John Dramani Mahama, is proud to be leading these efforts. We are committed to working harder to bring further relief to the citizenry and join the group of high human development countries. As a social democratic party that puts human development, 'people', at centre of development policy making, we are motivated by the gains made so far and we are working to improve on the gains.

Let us work together to change more lives and transform Ghana.

Signed:

EDWARD K. OMANE BOAMAH (DR.)

(Minister)