



## Ghana

Dominic Kwaku Fobih  
Minister for Education, Science and Sports



*Honourable Professor Dominic Kwaku Fobih has been a Cabinet Minister since 2001. He served as the Minister for Environment and Science from 2001-2002. He was then appointed Minister of Lands and Forestry from 2003-2004 and later Minister of Lands, Forestry and Mines from January 2005 to July, 2007.*

*He is currently the Minister of Education, Science and Sports and Chairman of the Ghana National Commission for UNESCO.*

*Prof. Fobih obtained his Bachelor of Education Degree from the University of Cape Coast, 1974. He proceeded to Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, Canada and was awarded an M.A. in Childhood Education in 1977 and subsequently, a PhD in Educational Psychology from the University of Alberta, also in Canada. He joined the University of Cape Coast as a Lecturer in 1979 and became a professor and the Dean of the Faculty of*

*Education in 1996. Prof. Fobih has numerous publication and technical reports to his credit and has carried out consultancy services for the World Bank, UNICEF, and IFPA/UNESCO funded projects. During his tenure as Minister of Environment and Science, he led Ghana to sign a number of International Conventions including those on Biodiversity, Biosafety and the Kyoto Protocol and Climate Change.*

*As the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Mines he initiated and successfully implemented the Greening Ghana Programme and Plantation Development throughout Ghana. In his capacity, as the Minister for Education, Science and Sports, he successfully launched a new Education Reform for Ghana in 2007 and successfully hosted the African Cup of Nations tournament dubbed Ghana 2008.*

### **Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future - Learners and Teachers**

Inclusive Education (IE) has grown from the conviction that education is a basic human right and that it provides the foundation for a more just and democratic society. All children therefore, have a right to education.

Inclusive Education is enabling since it seeks to provide appropriate responses to a broad spectrum of learners' needs in both formal and non-formal settings. It identifies barriers to learning and finds creative solutions for removing them.

In Ghana, Learners and Teachers are the important focal elements in our thinking and practice of Inclusive Education. All efforts – physical, human and material, are being made to make education systematically and progressively free for all children including those with disabilities and special educational needs.

Our Government ensures full participation and retention of all children of school going-age with emphasis on the prioritization of the disadvantaged in society. Further, the educational system is equipped with enhanced and flexible curriculum programmes at all levels. To achieve its goal of Education for All (EFA) by 2015, the Government has introduced the capitation grant, the school feeding program and free bussing system, among others, for school-children, at the Basic Education level.

The Teacher Training Curriculum has also been enriched and expanded to cater for the needs of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and those with Special Educational Needs (SENs). There are also massive capacity-building programmes



for teachers and officers in mainstream schools. Some of the practical approaches that we have adopted to ensure a shift from Regular Education to Inclusive Education involve establishing special units for children with intellectual disabilities on the premises of regular schools for social integration. The blind and low vision students are also being integrated into regular schools, with resource support.

Additionally, there are resource teachers attached to pilot schools to offer pupil / teacher support. Blind and deaf students are also integrated into Senior High Schools, Teacher Training Colleges and the Universities with resource support. Funds have been provided for a New National Assessment Centre. Ten regional assessment centres and vans which will afford mobility to communities to identify and assist children with disability, have been provided.

Furthermore, classrooms are being re-designed to make them disability-friendly. Emphasis on sensitization and awareness creation are on-going.

In spite of challenges with inadequate teaching/learning materials, negative societal attitudes against children with disabilities and special education needs, we are convinced it should be possible for schools to accommodate and integrate all children, regardless of their physical, environmental, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic and other recognizable differences.

While we salute UNESCO for untiring efforts at promoting Education for All, we call for increased education on inclusiveness within all its Member States, focusing particularly on those in Africa. Indeed, every learner matters and we must all ensure that Education for All becomes a reality to ensure global peace, sustainable international co-operation and development.

May the International Conference on Education grow from strength to strength.