

Sesame Workshop’s commitment to empowering teachers

Helping teachers in Ghana’s low-resource kindergartens and primary schools provide child-friendly, inclusive education



The Need

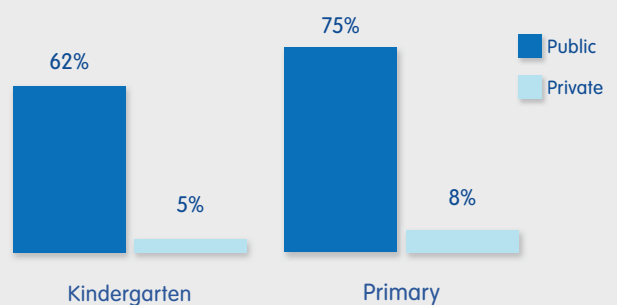
Enrollment is steadily increasing in non-state schools that provide affordable education throughout Ghana. These private schools are receiving a growing percentage of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. However, most schools are provided little support from the government or aid agencies to strengthen their services, including teacher quality.¹ This is a much-needed service as only 5% of private kindergarten teachers and 8% of private primary teachers are formally licensed.²

Additionally, some common barriers inhibit child-friendly learning environments. These include the widespread practice of corporal punishment in schools, as well as the lack of physical and social accommodation for girls and children with mental and physical disabilities. The lack of professional development resources to help teachers address these and other obstacles has a direct impact on the quality of early education in Ghana, and children’s lifelong development.³

Techniques for Effective Teaching Program

In response to this need, Sesame Workshop and the IDP Foundation, Inc. (IDPF) have partnered to provide kindergarten and primary school teachers in Ghana with quality in-service training opportunities and learning materials. First launched in 2012, the Techniques for Effective Teaching (TFET) program, supports schools participating in the IDP Rising Schools Program⁴

Percentage of trained teachers in Ghana, 2015



with Sesame Workshop’s innovative professional development kit. This kit is comprised of teacher training video modules, interactive training materials, and durable classroom learning materials.

Each video module leverages Sesame Workshop’s lovable, engaging Muppets and their unique ability to reach both children and adults. They ask questions and share concerns that children face in classrooms on a daily basis, from academic learning of literacy and numeracy, to social skills like developing self-confidence among girls, understanding differences, and extending empathy to other children.



The video modules feature fun and playful interactions between Muppets Zobi and Kami, with Matilda Asante in the role of their favorite teacher. The videos offer a vibrant demonstration of the new and engaging ways that teachers can work together with their students.

“Train the Trainer” Model

Covering 14 key elements of child-friendly learning, the TFET kit is delivered through a two-tier “train the trainer” model, in which a cohort of “master teachers” undergoes the first tier of training, and then replicates the experience to their fellow teachers. Engaged throughout the program are the Ghana Ministry of Education and Circuit Supervisors from the Ghana Education Services who provide regular visits to ensure faithful implementation of TFET’s capacity building efforts.

Our Impact

The 2013 program evaluation confirmed the success of this module training format, as well as the positive impact TFET has had on developing teachers’ sense of professionalism and quality of teaching. Results of the ongoing impact evaluation, launched in September 2017, will be available at the end of 2020.

To join our efforts to reach new children and communities, please contact:

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References:

- ¹ “Understanding Household and School Proprietor Needs in Low-Fee Private Schools in Ghana: A Needs and Impact Assessment of the IDP Rising Schools Program.” Prepared by Results for Development Institute, in partnership with Consumer Insight Consult Africa, for the IDP Foundation, Inc.
- ² Ghana Ministry of Education. (2015). *Education Statistics: Basic National Profile – 2014-2015 School Year Data*.
- ³ UNICEF Ghana. (2014). In Ghana, an effort to abolish violent discipline in schools.
- ⁴ See <http://www.idpfoundation.org/idp-rising-schools> for more information on the IDP Rising Schools Program.

14 modules of TFET covering key elements of child-friendly learning

1. The fundamentals of teaching
2. Developing a child-friendly learning space
3. Positive discipline and classroom management
4. Developing and teaching with creative low-cost resources
5. Pupil-centered learning for English literacy
6. Pupil-centered learning for mathematics
7. Time management
8. Practical ways to make the classroom creative and fun
9. Differentiated instruction
10. Evaluation and assessment
11. Girls’ education and inclusion
12. Creating an inclusive classroom
13. Early education and childhood development
14. Learning through play

The LEGO Play Box will be integrated into the TFET “learning through play” curriculum, to leverage the power of LEGO bricks in promoting the critical role of play in young children’s learning and development in Ghana, where classroom instruction largely consists of rote learning and non-interactive, individual work inside the classroom.



About Sesame Workshop

Sesame Workshop is the nonprofit media and educational organization behind Sesame Street, the pioneering television show that has been reaching and teaching children since 1969. Today, Sesame Workshop is an innovative force for change, with a mission to help kids everywhere grow smarter, stronger, and kinder. We’re active in more than 150 countries, serving vulnerable children through a wide range of media, formal education, and philanthropically-funded social impact programs, each grounded in rigorous research and tailored to the needs and cultures of the communities we serve. For more information, please visit sesameworkshop.org

About IDP Foundation

IDPF is a private non-profit foundation dedicated to encouraging and supporting the development of innovative and sustainable solutions to complex global issues. We do this by providing catalytic capital through investments and grants to support local and international programs. Our keystone initiative is the IDP Rising Schools Program, an education finance and training initiative developed in Ghana as a sustainable, scalable, and replicable model for improving educational infrastructure in existing low-fee private schools that serve low-income communities. Visit www.idpfoundation.org