

PROMOTING PEACE THROUGH EDUCATION. THE GHANA CASE

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Ambassador of Ghana to the Holy See

It gives me great pleasure and honour to be invited as one of the speakers on the occasion of the International Women's Day.

On behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Ghana and on my own behalf, I wish to convey fraternal greetings to you all.

The topic for this occasion: "Promoting Peace through Education" could not have been more appropriate looking at situations of conflict all over the globe.

Introduction

Education is the act of transferring knowledge in the form of experiences, ideas, skills, customs and values from one person to another person from generation to generations.

Education is widely acknowledged as the foundation of civilisation and development.

¹ Diplomata in Economia Domestica nel 1979, ha conseguito il *Bachelor of Education*, specializzandosi in *Home Economics & Integrated Science*, presso l'*University College of Education*, Winneba (Ghana) nel 1991. Successivamente ha ottenuto certificati in Pedagogia e nello Sviluppo della prima infanzia. Inoltre, ha conseguito il *Post Graduate Certificate "Leaders in Development: Managing Political & Economic Change"* presso la *Harvard University*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, e l'*Executive Master in Business Administration (EMBA)*, Gimpa (Ghana). Ha ricoperto vari incarichi presso diversi istituti di educazione ed è stata membro di vari consigli di enti statali. Dal 2001 al 2009 è stata membro del Parlamento e membro di vari comitati parlamentari. Dal 2005 al 2009 è stata Vice-Ministro nel Ministero dell'Educazione, delle Scienze e degli Sport. È stata Presidente del Consiglio Pastorale della Parrocchia San Karol di Aplaku/Bortianor.

Education reform

Is used to describe changes in policy, practices or organisation. Ghana's educational system had previously been regarded as one of the most highly developed and effective in West Africa.

Ghana's (then Gold Coast) education reforms started in 1952, by HE the 1st President of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, to enhance quality.

- 1961 free Universal Primary Education
- 1974 -1987- The new Structure & Content of Education
- 2007- New Education Reforms

Ghana Constitution 1992 - "Basic Education shall be free, compulsory and available to all". In 2003-2005, Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) was implemented under President Agyekum Kuffuor. Under Current Govt: 2017 – 2024- Kindergarten, Primary, JHS, SHS shall be described as BASIC.

Ghana operates on 6-3-4-4 systems.

- Primary Sch - 6yrs
- Junior High Sch - 3yrs
- Senior High Sch - 4yrs
- University Bachelor's Degree - 4yrs

Students may study in any of eleven local languages for much of the first 3yrs, after which English becomes the medium. Students continue to study a Ghanaian Language as well as French as a classroom subject through at least the 9th grade.

Education under Pres. Nana Akufo-Addo

Although Ghana has been successful at closing the gender gap at Primary level, it is still high at Secondary level. Expenditure on education has increased by 95% under the current government- Pres. Nana Akufo-Addo.

Free Secondary Education

- Free meals, free school uniforms, free house dresses, free PE kits, free textbooks, free WASSCE fees.
- Good for pro - poor families.

Double Track System to take care of increase in enrolment

- Government started to build infrastructure but some institutions need more classrooms, dormitories, dining halls, furniture etc.
- Double track system is gradually dying out now in place of single track system.

Promoting Peace in the classroom

Peace is not just absence of wars or violent conflicts but living in harmony, comfort and tranquillity.

Teacher teaches students the following:

- non engagement of wars and conflicts
- non purchase of weapons
- treating all people with kindness regardless of race, gender, sex and religion
- organise community projects eg: clean ups
- make art installations with the word "PEACE" or symbol of PEACE, let children paste on walls in class advocate peace in "T" shirts or stickers
- hang prayer flags in class and around school compound
- try hard not to judge others
- respect environment by avoiding littering
- attend "Parent - Teacher Association" meetings
- being patient with children and teach them to be patient with one another
- introduce compromise, cooperation and conflict resolution
- promote empathy among students; empathy is the capacity to understand another person's thoughts or feelings.

Peace Education in schools

- Model kindness and empathy
- Repair, don't punish
- Give a voice to the excluded
- Encourage collaboration in diverse ways
- Discuss controversial issues.

In Ghana, the chairman of the National Peace Council, Rt Rev Samuel Osabutey has inaugurated *Peace Ambassadors Club* to train students of Holy Trinity Senior High School (HOTCASS) to champion peace in their schools and communities - March 2022.

This project is expected to spread to other schools.

Conclusion

Promoting peace through education helps children to be agents of change and become peace ambassadors in their various communities.

Children are sensitized on the significance of peace in nation-building, prevention of violent extremism, principles of dialogue and consensus-building and conflict analysis.