



Building and Leading Effective Community and Stakeholders' Engagement: Operations Leadership 2

Resources for School Leaders in Ghana



Ghana Education
Service (GES)



LEADERSHIP
RESOURCE
HANDBOOK:
MODULE FOUR

Building and Leading Effective Community and Stakeholders' Engagement: Operations Leadership 2

Resources for School Leaders in Ghana

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Ghana Education
Service (GES)



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Foreword

Welcome to the *Leadership Programme Resources for School Leaders in Ghana*. The role of school leaders, including their boards, in providing equitable quality teaching and learning and ensuring that all learners achieve their full potential is both a professional responsibility and a moral obligation. Whilst the quality of teaching and learning is considered a major contributory factor to positive learning outcomes, there is growing evidence on the positive relationship between effective leadership, continuing professional development and continuous school improvements. The Ghana Education Service will ensure that all Ghanaian children of school-going age, irrespective of tribe, geographic location, gender, disability, religious and political affiliations, are provided with an inclusive and equitable quality learning experience.

The Ghana Education Service with support from the Transforming Teaching, Education & Learning (T-TEL), through its Leaders in Teaching (LiT) programme funded by the Mastercard Foundation, is ensuring that the capacity of secondary school leaders is enhanced. In this way, such school leaders can create a positive environment in their institutions for learning because schools are effectively led, and teaching is inclusive and effective. Through this support, six practical school leadership capacity development handbooks would be developed considering six modules and eight quality indicators identified from a deep dive exercise undertaken by the Ghana Education Service in December 2020. Gender equity approaches and social inclusion practices have been integrated into the modules to ensure an all-inclusive programme delivery in schools, considering the diverse needs of teachers, non-teaching staff, and students. Opportunities are provided for school leadership teams to work with their stakeholders to regularly undertake self-evaluation of their practices against the eight quality indicators and use the outcome for school improvement planning.

The six modules are:

- Module 1:** Leading and Managing a Learning-Focused School: Systems Leadership
- Module 2:** Leading and Managing Change for Schools and Students' Performance: Operations Leadership 1 (School Improvement Planning)
- Module 3:** Leading and Managing Curriculum Planning and Implementation
- Module 4:** Building and Leading Effective Community and Stakeholders' Engagement: Operations Leadership 2
- Module 5:** Leading and Managing Change for School Effectiveness
- Module 6:** Strategic Leadership (Leading Development Planning and Monitoring for Progress)

The eight quality indicators are:

1. leadership and management,
2. teaching and learning,
3. assessment,
4. monitoring and evaluation,
5. student support services
6. gender equality and social inclusion
7. stakeholders' engagement
8. school infrastructure and environment.

The leadership resource training handbooks are intended to *be used to enhance the capacity of school leaders (school management and board of governors) through structured training to improve the quality of leadership and management in schools*. Through these trainings, leadership

and management practices will be improved, leading to transformed schools with a culture that promotes:

- *robust internal quality assurance practices* to include continuous whole school self-evaluation and improvement planning through a participatory approach,
- *leading from the middle* with more attention given to efficiency and effectiveness of programmes and departmental heads,
- *practical approaches to teaching and learning* where schools can maximize available and potential resources, by building a strong partnership with stakeholders, leveraging their resources and expertise,
- *prioritisation of learning needs of every student* through an institutionalised gender equality and social inclusion responsive practices,
- *the establishment of a network of relevant and supportive stakeholders* and adopting a periodic and continued engagement process to working with them,
- *the use of technology for effective teaching and learning* and for stakeholder engagement; and
- *the creation of a sense of responsible accountability* for learning systems that support continuous and sustainable school improvement as an internal quality assurance practice.

Module 4: *Building and Leading Effective Community and Stakeholders' Engagement: Operations Leadership 2* of the *School Leadership Resource Training Handbook* is the fourth out of six handbooks as a practical leadership guide for improving management, leadership, and governance of schools so that the schools are transformed into centres of learning: a learning-focused education institutions. The Ghana Education Service (GES) with support from the Transforming Teaching, Education & Learning (T-TEL) are ensuring that the capacity of all school heads, their leadership teams and school boards are developed through structured cluster-based and school-based workshops and coaching support informed by this practical leadership guide.

We are optimistic that together we can make our schools more learning-focused by making the schools teacher-focused and classrooms more learner-centred.

Thank you!

Prof. Ernest Kofi Davis

Director General
Ghana Education Service

MODULE 4: Building and Leading Effective Community and Stakeholders' Engagement: Operations Leadership 2

1.0 Introduction

This module explores strategies and approaches that school leaders, their leadership teams and school boards can use to collaboratively work with the school community and other stakeholders for the purpose of creating a learning-focused school that ensures that all learners have a meaningful learning experience during their time in school. In the learning-focused school, learning is everyone's business – teachers are learning (teacher-centred school) so are the learners (learner-centred classroom). The module adopts an operational definition of community that recreates, through cases and scenarios, the importance of school-community relationship and partnership for school improvement. The tools for effective school-community and stakeholders' engagement have been explored and the practical ways that school leaders can adopt and adapt to use the tools have been discussed and illustrated with the lived experiences of practitioners. Specifically, the role of information communication technologies and how to use them for school-community collaboration have been presented in the module.

The module is further intentionally situated within the first of three modules – Leading and Managing a Learning-Focused School: Systems Leadership; Leading and Managing Change for Schools and Students' Performance: Operations Leadership 1 (School Improvement Planning) and Leading and Managing Curriculum Planning, and Implementation – for the purpose of providing school leaders guidance on how they can mobilise community and stakeholders to implement key decisions, plans and actions emerging from the first three modules. Typically, the module provides a step-by-step guide on how schools can monitor their practices to ascertain whether their targets are being met and learning outcomes are improving, and also, how they are engaging the community and stakeholders to share findings and galvanise their support. There is a particular focus on tracking the progress being made in implementing activities in the school improvement plan (SIP) and whether the proposed targets are being achieved. Thus, the module exposes participants to the practices of monitoring, evaluation, learning and reporting, and how these can be conducted in the school to measure the success of the implementation of the school improvement plan. Critically, the module provides guidelines on how schools can leverage their school-community partnership to create a culture of annual school improvement planning and implementation aimed to improving learning outcomes with and for all learners so that they are adequately prepared for further studies, world of work and responsible adult life.

In this regard, school leaders after fully participating in the Module 4 training sessions, are expected to be well equipped with skills and competence that they can combine with their lived experiences to build a functional learning-focused school that improves the learning outcomes of all learners.

1.1. Learning outcomes

By the end of this module the participants should be able to:

- **build a database of key school-community members and stakeholders,**
- **use the database to identify and collaborate with specific stakeholders on specific and relevant initiatives aimed at enhancing the learning experience of all learners,**
- **create a pool of *ICT for effective communication champions* within the school to lead information dissemination with stakeholders and the wider community,**
- **establish an appropriate system for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of school improvement plan, and**
- **collaborate with the community to undertake a whole school self-evaluation and develop a new school improvement plan.**

To this end, Module 4 is divided into three sections. Thus:

1. School-community partnership and Cooperation
2. ICT for effective communication
3. School Improvement Planning and Internal Quality Assurance Systems

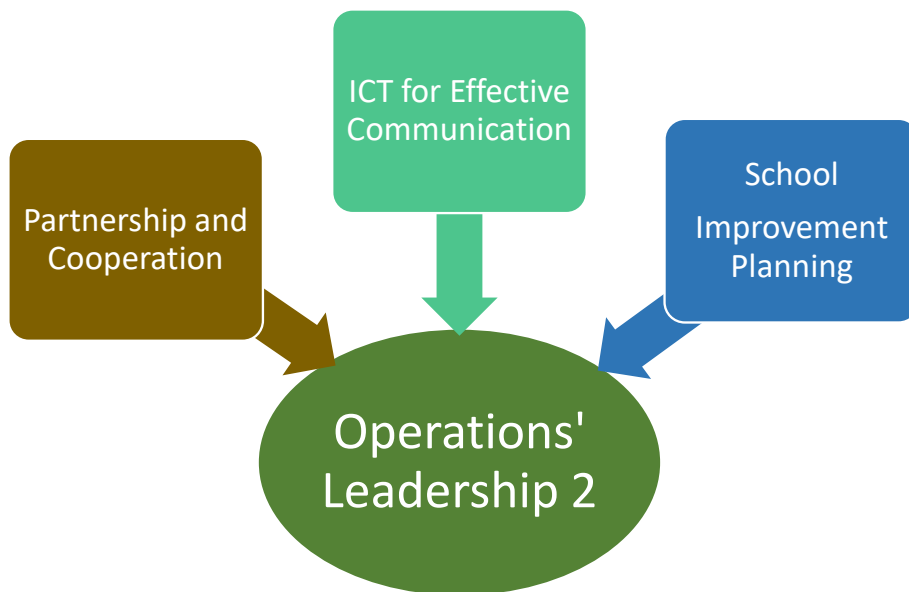


Figure 1: Operations' Leadership Framework

2.0 Section One: School-Community Partnership and Cooperation

The focus of this section is to explore with you the practice of creating a school and community partnership and cooperation for the purpose of transforming your schools into a learning-focused one. As mentioned previously, in a learning-focused school, teachers are learning and are able to turn their classrooms into learner-centred ones. This section uses cases, scenarios and stories from the lived experience of retired and serving school leaders to guide school leadership teams in their journey to create a functioning school-community premised on partnership and cooperation.

2.1 The School as a Learning Community

Scenarios have been used to explore what is meant by and how to create the school as a Learning Community. The impact of, the potential challenges in and suggested solution for the school as a Learning Community were identified and discussed.

Illustration: The Secret of Success

Akobam District Director of Education visited Akobam SHS and realized that the school environment was so calm and serene. From students to management everybody was so active in discharging their duties. What even pleased the Director was how the students were collectively performing very well during their Inter-House quiz competition.

Please, “Headmaster tell me your secret so that I can refer other schools to you for best practices”. The headmaster responded that all the internal stakeholders of the school came together to strategise to achieve these laurels.

In order to understand the concept of a school as a learning community, it is important to first of all understand the concepts of school and community. A school generally refers to an educational institution sited in buildings to provide learning spaces and learning environment for the teaching of students under the direction of teachers. A community on the other hand, is composed of people who feel a sense of belongingness and coming together to achieve a common goal.

A school community, therefore, is a group of people with a common interest who come together to create an environment that facilitates learning. It is a school community because of the shared interest in facilitating learning.

2.1.1 What is and features/characteristics the School as a Learning Community?

School as a learning community is a group of learners in the school who come together to achieve their learning goals through collaboration, supporting one another, sharing of knowledge and resources in order to achieve that common goal.

There are some features and characteristics that identify a school as a learning community. Some of these features include::

- **Shared Vision, Mission and Core Values:**
This implies that members of the school community work towards the achievement of a common goal based on their common belief, which in this instance is to provide a learning centre for the education of the community. They use the mission and vision as a guide to work towards the achievement of that common goal. The school community is also guided by common valued principles that are central to achieving its goal.
- **Supportive and Shared leadership:**
This refers to a situation where individual members of the school community work in different capacities and leading roles in order to achieve a common goal
- **Collective Creativity:**
This refers to members coming together to generate ideas and provide innovative processes to solve a common problem. In the school community new and expansive patterns of thinking are used to foster collaboration among all stakeholders to create an efficient and effective learning centre.
- **Sense of belongingness:**
In the school community, individual members develop a sense of being part of the processes and collaborations that make the school a learning centre. The views, ideas and suggestions of all community members are valued and considered.
- **Trust among members:**
This is where members have faith or trust in the shared purpose of the community. (Lenning and Ebbers 1999).

Scenario 1: Together we can

At the first staff meeting of the first term of the 2024 academic year, the Headmaster of Waakye SHS announced the following to his staff:

“I want us to collectively work towards finding solution(s) to our declining academic performance in our WASSCE results over the past three years”.

“Firstly, everyone should contribute in one way or the other to the solutions to the problem. Secondly, we must all agree on the specific modalities/steps to adopt to solve the problem identified. In that light, I propose we form smaller groups and meet periodically to brainstorm on the issue(s).

Thirdly, at the end of each term, we will all meet again as a whole group, to evaluate whether we have achieved our collective aim or not.

The general rule for this arrangement is that “Every One’s view must be respected”

Additionally, the principle underpinning this arrangement is “Together we can”.

Reflective Questions

1. Are there strategies in the scenario that you can adopt to achieve the goals of your school?
2. What is your preference – collective decision making or sole decision making in the achievement of your school’s goals and why?
3. What other methods could you adopt to resolve the problem in the scenario?

2.1.2 How to Create a School as a Learning Community

This can be achieved by creating a school climate that is characterized by physical and emotional safety, joy in learning, kindness, and positive leadership. This can be done by:

- **Defining group expectations:** school leadership must ensure that the mission, vision and values are well spelt out and explained to members of the school community. Efforts must be made to ensure that members of the community buy into the objectives of the school community and what they intend to achieve.
- **Collaborative learning:**
Leadership of the school community must inculcate the culture of learning together to achieve a common goal. Through collaborative learning, members of the school community work in groups small enough to ensure individual participation in activities and learning tasks. Members in the groups work on separate tasks that contribute to a common overall outcome, or work together on a shared task for the final outcome.
- **Recognizing and celebrating diversity:**
This is where members of the school community are orientated to accept diverse views in pursuance of achieving a common goal. In short, the spirit of “weism” should be instilled among members of the school community.
- **Soliciting and responding to feedback from community members:**
In order to create a school community, leadership need to put mechanisms in place to constantly receive feedback on the outcome of the activities of the school community and give appropriate responses.
- **Creating an inclusive environment that is responsive to Gender, Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) issues:**
School leadership must ensure that they consciously create awareness on the issues of GESI as well as SEL among the school community.

2.1.3 Impact/Importance of the School as a Learning Community

A school that is able to create a learning community, will achieve the following competencies and skills among its learners;

- Creativity and innovation
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Communication
- Improve learning outcomes
- Facilitate collaborative learning

2.1.4 Potential challenges in Creating a School Learning Community and Suggested Remedies

Scenario 2: Everyone's View Matters

At the second staff meeting of the term of Waakye SHS to evaluate the steps that were taken to improve academic performance as agreed in the first staff meeting, some staff members raised some challenges surrounding the method adopted. Mr. Banana said, “Mr. Headmaster, we found it very difficult after our hectic daily schedules to meet as a group to discuss issues”. He added that, what compounded the problem was the fact that no snack, writing materials nor monetary rewards were given.

At that point, Mrs. Cocoyam also jumped to her feet and supported the views of Mr. Banana and added that, some staff refused to come for the meeting, leaving the work in few hands as if the school is for only the latter group. She added that, some of those who managed to come, talked as if they were the only ones who had the solutions to the teething problem of academic decline.

The Headmaster calmed them down and reminded them about the principle of “together we can” and the ground rule of “every one’s view matter”. He assured them that he would meet management to see how to address the other issues, but stressed the fact that, they needed to collectively find solutions to the problem of academic decline.

Reflective Questions

1. What are the challenges identified in the scenario?
2. How should the school management team deal with the complaints raised by some staff?
3. As a school leader, why would you use “collective efforts” as against sole decision making?

Potential Challenges

In a quest to achieving a school learning community, leadership of the school must be mindful of the fact that they could be faced with some potential challenges which may include the following;

- Implementation challenges
- School leadership challenges
- Issues of recognition of diversity and inclusivity
- Commitment among members
- Time management, and attendance challenges
- Inadequate resources

Remedy

In order to overcome some of the potential challenges as outlined above, various school leaders must devise strategies in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders to overcome the potential challenges listed.

Conclusion

Maintaining school as a Learning Community remains one of the critical approaches to adapt to achieve common educational goals.

School leadership therefore should endeavor to turn their schools into learning communities where all stakeholders are conscientized to appreciate the reality that, with support and collaboration, not only are learning outcomes improved, but the members of the learning community also develop self-knowledge and self-esteem. Additionally, the school learning community is a place of innovation that makes daily learning enjoyable and fun, besides getting the work done.

2.2 Session 2: Stakeholders for School Improvement and Learning

2.2.1 Introduction

Schools all over the world work in partnership with stakeholders to ensure that they are able to perform creditably for effective teaching and learning outcomes. As schools engage in the teaching learning enterprise, they need to work with stakeholders for successful planning and implementation of guidelines and procedures. Education stakeholders work collaboratively to provide students with a comfortable and supportive learning environment, which contributes greatly to the development of their respective communities later on. Stakeholders encompass a broad spectrum of individuals, groups, and development partners who have interests in the educational outcomes of learners. Stakeholders are greatly involved in the school improvement and learning process.

Stakeholders for school improvement and learning could be classified under internal and external categories. The basic criteria for categorising a stakeholder as internal or external in this section is hinged on the organogram of the Ghana Education Service.

2.2.2 Internal Stakeholders

2.2.2.1 Learners

The primary recipients of education in second cycle schools are the learners, who are mainly young adults in senior high, senior high technical and technical and vocational schools. They are the most important stakeholders because they are at the center of the school and every activity in the school as a learning center revolves around them.

Roles:

- Engage with the curriculum by participating in classroom activities
- Complete assignments
- Take assessments to gauge their understanding and progress.
- Provide feedback on teaching methods, school decisions and overall learning environment

Contributions to School Improvement:

- Learners participate in co-curricular activities to build social life of school
- They contribute to the school's culture and community.
- They influence school decisions and improvement plans as student leaders.
- They provide information data, test scores, and progress reports that help identify strengths and weaknesses in the school's educational approach.

- Learners provide peer support for one another by fostering a supportive and collaborative learning atmosphere and encourage peers to strive for excellence.

2.2.2.2 Teachers

Teachers are the frontline implementers of the school curriculum. Teachers serve as role models, mentors and life guides to students. They play very crucial roles in shaping the futures of learners and try to instill appropriate values and ethics in them.

Roles:

- Engage in initial preparation for their teaching duties
- Facilitate teaching and learning in the school.
- Assess learners' academic progress

Contributions to School Improvement

- Offer Guidance and Counselling services to support learners.
- Supervise co-curricular activities.
- Help to maintain discipline in schools
- Set high expectations which motivate and inspire and challenge learners to set achievable goals
- Facilitate lifelong learning activities for learners to become creative
- Establish safe and stimulating environment for learners.
- Set high goals to challenge learners' ability to think critically
- Adapt teaching to respond to the needs and strength of learners.
- Manage learners' behavior effectively to ensure good and safe learning environment.

2.2.2.3 Non-Teaching Staff

They are supporting staff who enhance management, teaching and learning through their various activities. They include the administrative staff, accounting and procurement staff, librarians, kitchen staff, security staff, artisans, labourers, laboratory staff and other assistants. The various roles they play help in the smooth running of the school and help improve the school as a learning center.

Roles:

- See to the administrative activities that support management
- Support academic resources for effective learning
- Provide accounting support
- Provide healthy catering services
- Maintain conducive environment for learning
- Maintain facilities for learning
- Ensure security and safety of the school community

Contributions to Improvement of the School:

- Serve as members of TEWU and guide management in working with staff
- Serve on the Board of Governors, Management and Procurement Committees and help in decision-making

2.2.2.4 Board of Governors

The Board of Governors is the highest decision-making body of the school. It is a group made up of representatives of all major stakeholders of the school. These are:

- Management of the school
- Teaching staff
- Non-Teaching staff
- Faith-based Organisation
- Parents
- Traditional leaders
- Alumni
- District Assemblies

Roles

- Approves all major financial activities
- Approves guidelines, procedures, and school level policies of the school.
- Approves developmental projects
- Make recommendations on major disciplinary issues to the Council for implementation

Contributions to School Improvement:

- Provides leadership for the smooth running of the school
- Lobbies for projects and facilities for the school
- Raises funds to support the activities of the school

Scenario 3: "Discipline Dilemma"

Miss Beauty was very excited when she got an assurance letter to teach at the Bolt SHTS because it was considered one of the best grade A schools in Zombie West Region.

After two weeks of teaching, she observed that some of the learners were often late for the first lesson; the school compound and classrooms were very untidy; and more than half of the learners in the classroom did not take their lesson seriously, and failed to do any homework that was given to them.

When she made a report to Mr. Djim, the Head of Department, he she was quickly given the assurance letter because many teachers were leaving the school due to indiscipline among the learners.

Miss Beauty managed to convince Mr. Djim to get the Headmaster to hold a staff meeting to discuss measures to curb the learners' indiscipline behaviour. At the staff meeting the following decisions were taken:

- Internal suspension of one week for all who came to class late
- The latecomers were to clean the compound.
- Learners who did not clean the classroom were to do so after every prep for one week.
- Those learners who did not do their homework were to be given additional homework and limited time to submit all the assignments.

When Jason, the son of the Chairman of the Board of Governors informed his father about the decisions of the school, he came threatening to remove Miss Beauty and possibly the Headmaster from the school.

Reflective Questions

1. What three issues can you identify from the story?
2. What would you do as a Headmaster?
3. What lessons can we learn from the story?

2.2.3 External Stakeholders

2.2.3.1 Parents /Guardians

Parents and guardians are the primary caregivers of learners. They play a crucial role in supporting and guiding their ward's education both at home and in collaboration with the school.

Roles:

- Help with homework, encourage good study habits, and provide a conducive learning environment at home.
- Communicate with teachers and school staff to stay informed about their ward's progress
- Address concerns and collaborate on strategies to support their ward's learning.
- Engage in school activities, attend parent-teacher meetings,
- Participate in school decisions making through representation on Board of Governors.
- Advocate for learners' needs and broader school improvements.

Contributions to School Improvement:

- Boost learner's motivation and academic performance by showing interest and involvement in their ward's education.
- Provide insights and feedback on school policies, teaching practices, and the overall school environment from a parent's perspective.
- Volunteer their time, skills, and financial resources to support school programs, activities, and improvements.
- Foster a strong sense of community with the school, which is crucial for a supportive and inclusive school environment.
- Collaborate with the school to maintain discipline in the school.
- Help identify and address issues that affect student learning and well-being, contributing to more effective solutions and strategies.
- Serve as resource persons during school programs.
- Encourage the school to remain responsive to the needs of students for efficient and effective learning outcomes.

2.2.3.2 Alumni/ Associates and Affiliates

The alumni are old students of the school. They are committed to maintain the image of the school. The associates are other people who enrolled in the school but might not have completed their programs and are still interested in helping the school. There are also other individuals who have special commitment and love for the school, and who support the activities of the school as affiliates.

Roles:

- Become mentors and role models for students
- Present selves as good ambassadors of the school

Contribution to School Improvement:

- Raise funds for activities of the school
- Make financial contributions to support the school to deliver on its mission
- Collaborate with school to maintain discipline
- Support the school to maintain standards and traditions.
- Serve as resource persons for activities of the school.
- Attend Speech and Prizegiving days setting up networking events for prospective students to develop interest in different careers and professions.

2.2.3.3 Traditional Leaders

In the cultural set-up of Ghana, traditional leaders have become development partners of schools through various ways. Traditional leaders are chiefs and queen mothers in the local communities. Their roles as stakeholders of the improvement of schools can be traced to the many activities they engage in to help make the schools successful learning centers.

Roles:

- Preserve the culture of the community and transmit to learners
- They serve as bridges to promote collaboration between the community and school
- Undertake advocacy on developmental projects
- Serve on the Board of Governors and contribute to decision-making

Contributions to School Improvement:

- Donate lands as assets to schools
- Fund development projects such as infrastructure in the school.
- Lobby government to provide facilities that help teaching and learning processes
- Support the school to maintain discipline among both staff and students
- Mediate in conflict resolution between the communities and the school and ensures peaceful co-existence.
- Enrich the school curricula with cultural content through incorporation of indigenous knowledge and cultural literacy.

2.2.3.5 Faith-Based Organizations

Faith-based organisations are religious bodies within the community. They are founders of some schools and as such are major stakeholders in school improvement activities.

Roles:

- Provide infrastructure
- Fund projects in the schools
- Collaborate with school to maintain discipline in the school
- Act as spiritual and moral leaders of the school
- Represented on the Board of Governors and contribute to decision-making in the school
- Influential in the selection of leaders or heads of their schools.

Contributions to School Improvement:

- Support the development of human resource by providing and funding professional development programmes for staff.
- Serve to improve the collaboration between the school and the community by mediating in conflict resolution between the two stakeholders.
- Influence policy formulation
- Raise funds to provide and improve physical infrastructure in the school.
- Provide scholarship for needy students to enable them to have access to education.

Scenario 4: “Ethics under Fire”

Mr. Sam Okyena, the Headmaster of Susu Grace Church SHS, has been asked by the School’s Board Chair, Pastor Tebu, to resign due to non-academic performance of the learners. Meanwhile, an informant from the school had informed local media that the Board Chair requested to use the school bus to convey cement to his building site which the headmaster refused.

According to local FM and Information Centres, some teachers informed the media stations that the Board Chair, in addition to, the request of the bus, requested admission for students who do not qualify per the admission criteria.

The teachers had also been complaining about infrastructure deficit, lack of adequate furniture, inadequate quality teaching and learning materials, and indiscipline among learners.

Reflective Questions

1. What steps should Mr Sam Djim take to deal with the situation
2. Which key stakeholders would you identify and recommend to Mr Sam Djim help address the problems?
3. How should the key stakeholders act to resolve the issues?

2.2.3.6 Relevant Industries

These are industries that provide direct and indirect support for improvement of schools. They may be in the catchment area of the school or not.

Roles:

- Provide financial support to the school
- Fund projects in the school
- Provide financial support to needy but brilliant students
- Provide sponsorship for sports and other activities in the school

Contributions to School Improvement:

- Support learners with internship opportunities
- Provide teaching and learning resources to support the school
- Support award programmes during Speech and Prize giving Days.
- Provide input for curriculum alignment to feed into career goal-setting of learners
- Support the school with experts as resource persons during career day programmes and other mentoring activities

2.2.3.7 Businesses and Service Providers

There are businesses and service providers who serve as stakeholders for schools. Some of these come as short-term stakeholders because their relationship with the school may be transient. There are contractors who might have been contracted to do special work in the school. There may also be businesses that act as suppliers of goods and services. These stakeholders can be approached to help with school improvement in various ways. Such stakeholders usually give a one-off support but the school can cultivate the relationship with such businesses and sign memoranda of understanding with the

Roles:

- Provide teaching and learning resources to support learners
- Support relevant activities of the school

Contribution to School Improvement

- Help to maintain and improve infrastructure
- Offer scholarship to needy but brilliant students
- Support award programmes during Speech and Prizegiving Days.

2.2.3.8 Tertiary Education Institutions

Tertiary Institutions are institutions of higher learning that provide great service to second cycle schools. Tertiary institutions are avenues for developing 21st Century Skills such as critical thinking, communication and problem-solving skills. They serve to train learners to develop the skills that will make them fit the world of life and the world of work in future. Tertiary institutions contribute greatly to school improvement.

Roles:

- Influence policy formation through research in education;
- Provide evidence-based good practices for teachers to enhance school as a learning center;
- Share insights on effective teaching and learning strategies;
- Inform school improvement initiatives and educational policies;
- Provide opportunities for learners to learn from experts in various fields;
- Provide distance and lifelong learning opportunities to learners and teachers;
- Contribute to the assessment of learning progress of learners; and
- Train teachers and senior management of schools.

Contributions to School Improvement:

- Build social and academic skills of learners;
- Motivate learners to excel and challenge learners to perform better; and
- Tertiary institutions that are located near second cycle schools provide opportunities for schools to use their facilities to enhance learning outcomes.

2.2.3.9 Teacher Unions

Teacher Unions as organized labour or pressure groups in education and legally constituted to play meaningful roles in school improvement. In Ghana there are three major teacher unions groups, namely: GNAT, NAGRAT, and Pre-Tertiary Teachers' Union (Coalition of Concern Teachers)

Roles:

- Bargain for teachers' condition of service to ensure retention;
- Ensure quality of education by improving teaching approaches and maintaining high professional standard;

Contributions to School Improvement:

- Support education reforms, programs and policies for school improvement; and
- Serve on the Board Governors and contribute to decision-making.

2.2.3.10 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAS)

MMDAs in Ghana are responsible for implementation of education policies and activities at the Metropolitan, Municipal and District levels. They are expected to contribute to school improvement in their jurisdictions.

Roles

- Provide infrastructure (e.g., buildings, furniture) and other social amenities at the school.
- Support the provision of stationery, printing equipment.
- Serve on the Board Governors and contribute to decision-making
- Provide oversight responsibility on implementation of decisions of the education services at the district level.
- Monitor academic progress of learners
- Support in-Service Training

Contribution to School Improvement:

- Encourage maximization and efficient use of available human resource to education delivery;
- Provide good school environment, gender and geographical quality in terms of access and quality of education in the districts;
- Coordinate activities of NGOs; and
- Undertake preparation of budget and action plans.

2.2.3.11 Developmental Partners/ Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOS)

Non-governmental organizations, popularly called NGOs were first called such in Article 71 in the Charter of the United Nations in 1945. NGOs have no fixed formal definition but are usually defined as nonprofit entities that do not work under governmental control. NGOs advocate for social change and also work towards influencing policies and legislation that affect the communities they serve. By engaging in advocacy work, NGOs raise awareness on critical issues such as human rights, environmental protection, and social justice, education, striving to bring about systemic change that can improve the lives of people on a larger scale. In education, they are stakeholders who work mostly to provide conducive environment for teaching and learning.

Roles:

- Provide educational opportunities for learners;
- Construct school infrastructure;
- Provide teaching learning resources to schools; and
- Fund school projects.

Contributions to School Improvement:

- Collaborate with schools to reduce illiteracy rates;
- Equip learners with the skills needed to participate fully in society; and
- Strengthen the abilities of staff through capacity-building workshops.

Scenarion 5: “Heritage or Progress”

Former students of Zahri Technical Institute protested against the decision of the Chief of Zahri to lease part of the school’s land to a private developer to put up a hotel.

The Headmaster and the teachers had earlier met with the Chief to ask him to rescind his decision, but they did not get any positive feedback. At the Board of Governor’s meeting, the Chair and all the other Board members also asked the representative of the Traditional Council to advise the Chief, all to no avail. According to the chief, he needs to develop his town and by leasing that school land that has been fallow for so many years to the private developer, he will get the youth of Zahri employed in the hotel, reduce the unemployment rate in the town and subsequently, reduce robbery.

The alumni group, comprising both local and national executive of the alumni, has accused the chief of being inconsiderate. The former students are questioning the necessity of using school lands for a private development when the school was still growing and developing and would need additional infrastructure. The president of the old students further queried “why would any well-meaning leader place a hotel within the premises of a second cycle institution?”

She also highlighted some existing infrastructural challenges, such as insufficient classrooms and bungalows, that would need land for building and should be the concern of all stakeholders, especially the traditional leaders.

The school’s alumni association has vowed to resist the encroachment and has called on the Traditional Council and the MCE to advise the Chief to reconsider his decision.

Reflective Questions

1. What other steps should the alumni take to resolve the issue?
2. As the MCE, how would you address the situation?
3. As a stakeholder, what steps would you recommend to be taken to resolve the situation?

Conclusion

Stakeholders are integral to the running of the administrative and management activities of the school. The list identified in this section is not exhaustive. School leaders should encourage all relevant stakeholders within the community to collaborate and improve the schools. School-Community cooperation will improve schools and enhance the learning experience of learners. The stakeholders must find innovative strategies for building effective partnership and cooperation with the school community.

2.3 Session 3: Strategies for Building Effective Partnerships and Cooperation

2.3.1 Introduction

Building partnerships and cooperation with stakeholders is essential for schools to achieve their goals and provide a conducive environment to ensure all learners learn. By fostering collaborative relationships with various stakeholders, school leaders can enhance student learning and achievement.

Partnerships could also help to maintain close and strong relationships with the various stakeholders of the school, which can be beneficial to the schools in diverse ways. These partnerships and cooperation can provide access to resources and expertise that can enhance student learning and prepare them for further study, the world of work, and adult life. For instance, partnerships with local businesses and organizations can provide opportunities for hands-on experiences, mentorship, and career guidance.

The vision, mission, and goal of a school cannot be achieved without effective partnerships with key stakeholders. The nature of the work of the school is such that the contributions of various partners would have to be harnessed to achieve improved learning outcomes. The more stakeholders are involved in school activities and programs, the greater the chances of adding value to the achievement of the goals of the school.

It is therefore important that school leaders develop appropriate strategies to engage relevant stakeholders in driving the vision and mission of the school.

2.3.2 The Nature of Partnerships and Cooperation

The nature of partnerships refers to the characteristics and dynamics that define the relationship between the school and their partners/stakeholders.

Some key aspects of the nature of partnerships could include:

- Short-term, mid-term and long-term partners;
- Major and minor partners; and
- Traditional and Non-traditional partners.

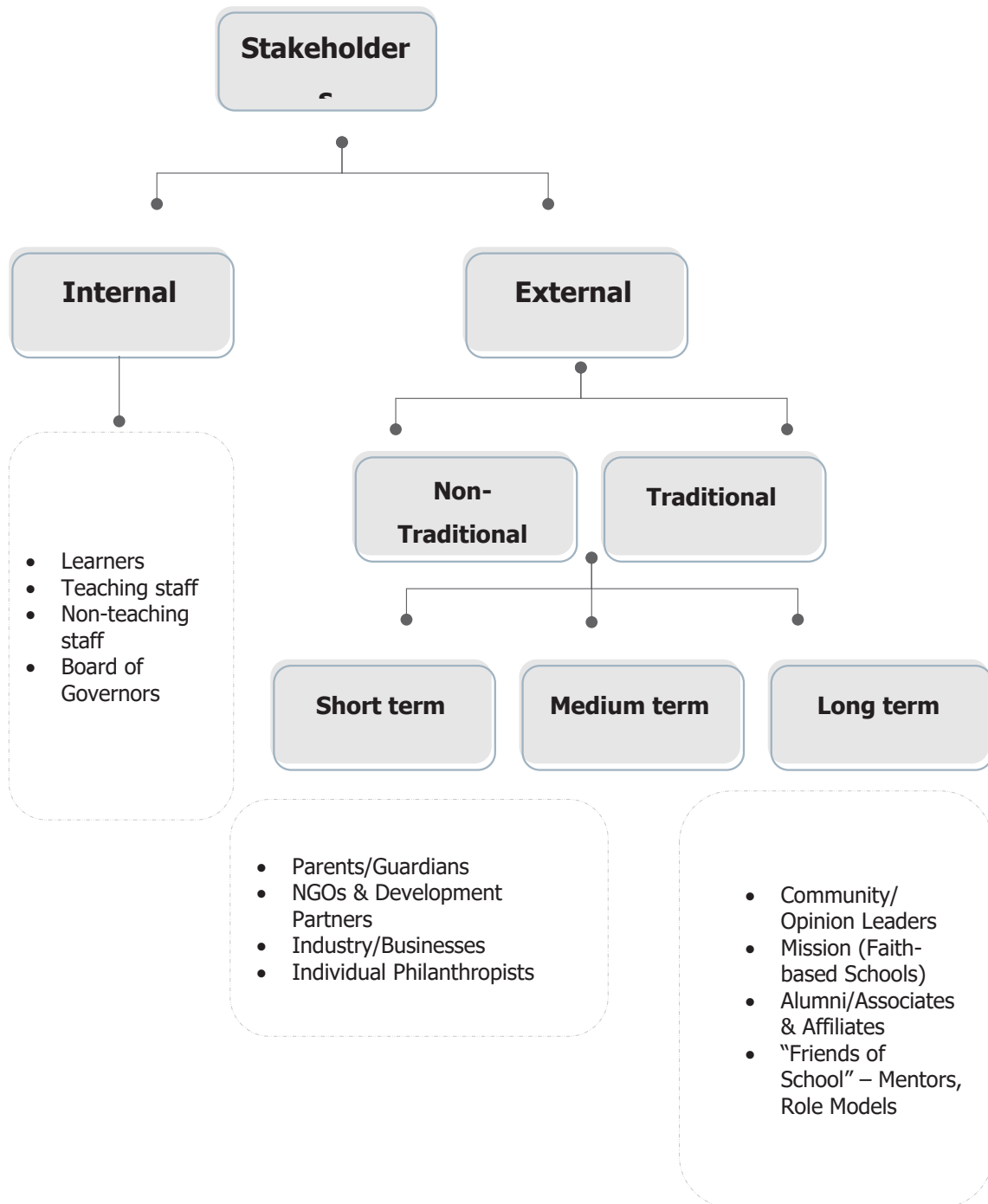


Figure 2. Categories of stakeholders for partnership

2.3.3 Principles that Govern Partnership and Cooperation

1. Understand the interests of stakeholders according to your needs: Have the ability to balance and manage some partner's appeal and school interests. E.g. control over-reliance of some partners on the use of school property for private purposes, which is against the rules of the school.
2. Means of communication: Effective communication is crucial for successful stakeholder partnership. Choosing the most appropriate communication channels for your specific stakeholders or partnership enables you to achieve your intended goals. Your choice of

language must be understood by the majority. When sending notices or meeting stakeholders, you must make use of varied language level, having in mind the category of stakeholders you intend to engage. E.g. Voice notes could be used when sending messages to the non-teaching staff or parent using WhatsApp. Other new ICT tools are available for use which would be explored in detail in Section 3 of this module.

3. Assessment of track records: This involves gathering information about stakeholders past performance, reliability and credibility.

Scenario 6: The Eye Opener

Mr. Agyemang, the head of Demo SHS has the desire to construct a modern library for his school. His ambition is to make the school one of the best in the sub-region. That notwithstanding, he has exhausted all the money he realized from IGF. He also realized that there was more to be done. At their last management meeting, he expressed his desire to undertake more projects but lamented on lack of fund. The assistant head academic humbly asked the head of school to render accounts on what had been spent so far. He also suggested to management to start establishing close relationships with various stakeholders which can be solidified as partners for developing the school. The senior house mistress quickly chipped in “how do we go about it?” Her concern prompted management to have an extensive discussion on the matter and subsequently put strategies in place to partner some stakeholders to assist the school.

Reflections:

- a. Was the assistant head academic right for demanding accountability from the head of school?
- b. In your opinion, what are some of the stakeholders that can help the school to embark on this project?
- c. What strategies do you think should be put in place?

2.3.4 Means of Engaging with Stakeholders

There are various ways of engaging with stakeholders including:

- Regular in-person meeting;
- Virtual or online meeting (Use of ICT tools such as social media, SMS, Zoom meetings, Emails and updates);
- Survey and feedback forms;
- Focus group and town hall meetings;
- Newsletters;
- Public events; and
- Traditional Media, such as TV, Radio, Information Centers.

2.3.5 Strategies for Engagement with Stakeholders

1. Formulating guidelines (policy) for school-stakeholder partnerships: Ghanaian schools operate within a regulatory framework set by the government. School leaders must develop school-based guidelines and regulations with Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to govern partnerships and cooperation with stakeholders.

2. Adhering to legal requirements ensures compliance and protects the interests of all parties involved.
3. Identifying relevant stakeholders: As a school community, several factors could influence your choice of stakeholder partnerships and cooperation. These include:
Identifying the types of partners available for partnership e.g. short-term, mid-term and long-term, major and minor, traditional and non-traditional)
4. Developing a stakeholder engagement plan: After identifying your stakeholders, incorporate an annual school plan from which weekly and termly engagement calendars can be developed to engage each stakeholder group, both internal and external.
 - Board - mandatory meeting - once a term
 - School Leadership Team (SLT), e.g. weekly meetings
 - Academic board meeting – once a term
 - Teaching staff. E.g. 3 times in a term
 - Non-teaching staff- e.g. once a term
They can be categorized and met at different times e.g. transport staff, kitchen staff, security, laborers.
 - Students - student leaders can meet separately e.g. fortnightly and the students' body at different levels e.g.
 - Parents- mandatory meetings – once a term (e.g. there must be a general PA meeting and a special meeting for parents of 1st-year students in the first term). Final years at a different time.
 - Alumni – e.g. once a year
5. Sharing vision and mission: Stakeholders with an aligned vision and interest with some educational institutions are more likely to form partnerships for mutual benefits. Therefore, schools must be strategic in communicating their vision, mission and core values to position themselves to attract potential partners.
6. Ensuring transparency and accountability: Throughout the engagement, there must be timely reporting on progress, achievements and areas of improvement. Establish processes to involve key stakeholders in decision making.
7. Regular evaluation of engagement with stakeholders: There must be regular joint evaluations to assess partnership effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.
8. Seeking feedback on engagement with stakeholders: This is essential to understand their needs, concerns and suggestions. School leaders should seek feedback through various channels to understand stakeholders' needs, improve engagement and strengthen partnerships.
9. Recognition: Acknowledging the efforts of stakeholders makes them feel more important and helps the school to hold effective engagement with them. This can be done through:
 - Letters of appreciation;
 - Plaques of recognition;
 - Invitation to important events in the school; and
 - Introduction/acknowledgement at speech and prize-giving day celebration and other special functions.

In engagement with stakeholders, school leaders must ensure that at all levels, they are informing, consulting, involving and collaborating.

Scenario 7: “50 or Halt”

It is admission season, and the President of the Old Student’s Association of Champions SHS presents a list of 50 protocol admissions to the Headmistress, Mrs. Agogo. Upon receiving the list, Mrs. Agogo pleads with the president to reduce this number, as the available space can only accommodate 10 students from the alumni association. However, the president insists that all 50 students must be considered, emphasizing that they are selections from various year groups. He also makes a subtle threat regarding the association’s ongoing project, implying that it may be impacted if their request is not granted.

Reflections

- a. Could the Headmistress have taken any prior actions to minimize such incidents?
- b. Is it possible to implement a policy at the school level to reduce the occurrence of such incidents?
- c. If you encounter such situations, how are you going to handle it?

2.3.6 Fostering Effective Engagement

For effective engagement, you must have in mind to do the following:

1. **Identify Shared Goals and Values:** To ensure any successful partnership and cooperation, it is essential to identify shared goals and values. The alignment of these shared goals and values ensures that all parties are working towards a common objective and a shared sense of purpose. By clearly defining and committing to mutual aspirations, schools can create a solid foundation for collaboration, sustained success and ultimately enhancing the learning experience of all learners.
2. **Language and communication:** Choose language that can be understood by the majority. When sending notices or meeting stakeholders, you must make use of varied language level keeping in mind the category of stakeholders you intend to engage. Again, communication with stakeholders must be timely and regularly.
3. **Trust and Respect:** Trust and respect form the foundation of any strong partnership and cooperation. By valuing others – individuals or entities’ perspectives, skills, and contributions, the school community will create an environment where everyone feels valued and empowered. Building and maintaining trust requires consistency in dealings, respectful interactions and a commitment to integrity, equity and fairness.
4. **Timing:** Selection of time for engagement must be suitable for the stakeholders. One way of achieving this is to provide options for stakeholders to choose from. A date and time convenient for a majority stakeholders becomes the selection. Another approach is to capture the meeting on the school calendar at the beginning of the semester. This provides enough time for stakeholder to plan around the date and indicate their availability in advance of the date.
5. **Clear Communication:** Clear communication is the cornerstone of any collaborative relationship. In the dissemination of information, a school needs to institute effective communication

protocols using – in-person strategies, in-service and ICT. It involves not only the accurate exchange of information but also the active listening and understanding necessary to prevent miscommunication and strengthen trust. This also involves prioritizing transparency and open respectful dialogue, where all stakeholders are informed, and engaged every step of the way.

6. **Mutual Benefit:** Every successful partnership and cooperation hinges on the principle of mutual benefit – a “2-Way-Win”. When partners recognize and appreciate the advantages of working together, there is a greater likelihood to commit fully to the partnership and in the creation of value for all involved.
7. **Adaptability:** School community partnerships must be adaptable in all dealings. This is critical in navigating the dynamic nature of collaborative efforts. The ability to embrace changes and being open to new or evolving ideas and approaches will enable partnerships to respond effectively to unforeseen challenges and opportunities. By maintaining a willingness to adjust, re-create and innovate, stakeholders will ensure that collaboration remains resilient and relevant.
8. **Understand stakeholder’s expectations:** Identify and understand the expectations of your stakeholders to meet them. Use of a survey is a practical way of gathering the views and expectations of stakeholders. With this information in hand, the school leaders are able plan manage such expectations more effectively and efficiently.
9. **Trust and credibility:** Stakeholders with a proven track record of reliability and integrity are more attractive partners. School leaders must ensure due diligence when establishing partnerships with their stakeholders.

2.3.7 Building Effective School-Stakeholder Partnership and Cooperation

Scenario 8: The Case of Green House SHS

On Okoko FM, parents from Green House SHS, wearing red bands and appearing visibly upset, are demanding the removal of Headteacher Mr. Events. They claim that the new head’s rigid adherence to moral standards has made it difficult for them to work with him. Parents also cited the head’s inflexibility and sticking to the school’s ethics of conduct without any consideration as their inability to cooperate with him. The radio presenter questioned whether this call for removal was related to allegations of exam malpractice that were allegedly condoned by the previous head and some teachers. The parent leaders strongly reject this rumor, insisting that Mr. Events is hot-headed, and confrontational and refuses to oblige to their demands.

Reflections

What is your opinion about the new headteacher’s approach to moral ethics and its impact on the relationship between parents of final-year learners at Green House SHS?

2.3.7.1 Parents

Initial engagement is crucial for future relationship therefore all must be done to give a good impression of the school community and share necessary information that will make them integrate well into the school community.

1. The first PTA meeting with First Year students must include the following;
 - Introduction of school; Management
 - Sharing of vision, mission and core values
 - Expectation of parents
 - Sharing of SIP with parents
 - Channels of communication
 - Important school rules
 - Important school events.
 - PA constitution
2. Establishment of PTA Committees
 - Education
 - Fundraising
 - Sports
 - Legal
 - Project
 - Fundraising
3. Regular, frequent and timely passing on of relevant information.
4. Transparency and accountability
5. Meeting of the parents of the Year Groups: This is very necessary because expectations of parents differ from one year group to the other.

2.3.7.2 Alumni

1. This is a major stakeholder whose supports and contributions to the school cannot be overlooked. To have the cooperation of vibrant alumni, school leaders should establish good relationship with their students while they are in school. Start early engagement and sensitization on the importance of school-alumni partnerships with the students. This is because they attend schools for a short period but become alumni for their entire lives.
2. Make students feel valued and plant the seed for a meaningful relationship with them. This will give them a sense of belongingness and willingness to give back to the school.
3. Keep consistent relationship with the alumni because long term relationships require a sustainable approach. Invest in organizing programs that involves them, like dinner night, and professional development workshops where some could be invited as resource persons.
4. Proactively ask for feedback from alumni on regular basis
5. Minimize making direct financial requests from alumni. Create avenues that will entice them to donate willingly.

Scenario 9: The Flashback

A member of 1999 year group of Gaga SHST suggested on their WhatsApp platforms that they contribute and purchase 200 mono desks and donate to their former school. A significant majority of the members responded that the idea was laudable. However, a few members of the group strongly kicked against the proposal. Those who were not in favor of the idea remarked that the head of school, during their time in school, was inconsiderate. They added that she prevented them from attending social gathering on several occasions whenever they were a few minutes late due to scarcity of water supply on campus. Their position was that it was the oversight responsibilities of the head to ensure that there was adequate water supply on campus. This is generated divided opinion among the members which resulted in lack of consensus in advancing the proposal to purchase the 200 mono desks for the school.

Reflections:

- a. What is your opinion on the scenario?
- b. What can school leaders do to avert such situation in the school?

Scenario 10: Name the Building

During a stakeholder engagement to commence the development of a School Improvement Plan (SIP), the awkward disposition of Nii Koi Kang, the chief's linguist and representative from the palace, was evident. Throughout the discussions, his contributions were heavily biased towards the benefits of the stool. When the collective did not agree with most of his suggestions, he became visibly agitated and questioned why at least one building had not been named after the traditional leader of the community. Nii Koi Kang's frustration grew as the meeting progressed. He expressed his belief that the community's traditions and leadership interests should be prominently acknowledged above focusing on the core educational mission considering the traditional authority had generously donated the land on which the school was built.

Reflections

- a. Do you agree with Nii Koi Kang?
- b. How can schools effectively balance the recognition and preservation of traditional authority while managing expectations of leaders?

2.3.7.3 Opinion Leaders

1. One needs to be visible because visibility is critical in building trust and engagement with the opinion leaders.
2. Embark on collaborative activities by allowing opinion leaders to see some of the development going on in the school.
3. Implement meaningful discussions with opinion leaders to spark their interest.
4. Involve them in co-curricular activities, such as opening days and school durbars.
5. Look for small and large ways to celebrate the achievements of opinion leaders.
6. Seek appropriate feedback from engagement with opinion leaders.

2.3.7.4 Non-Government Organizations (Local and International)

1. Establish good and firm relationships with organizations in your locality through regular invitation to professional or career guidance programs before putting in requests for support.
2. Formalize the partnership by drafting a Memorandum of Understanding to clearly define each party's roles, responsibilities, and contributions to the partnership. It should also contain information on the partnership's term, methods of communication, and dispute resolution procedures.
3. Maintain transparency and accountability throughout the partnership by regularly sharing progress reports, financial statements, and other relevant information with the NGOs.
4. Celebrate the successes and benchmarks attained as a result of the partnerships with NGOs to acknowledge their contributions. This could involve organizing events, issuing certificates of appreciation, or sharing success stories through various communication channels.

2.3.7.5 Academia/Tertiary Educational Institutions

1. Ensure that a common vision is shared towards teaching and learning success by sharing the tenets of the School's Guidelines for Partnership and Corporation.
2. Signing an MoU with the institution in question may be essential in guiding relationships while aligning with School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and other strategic plans.
3. Identify areas where the tertiary institution can help improve teaching and learning in the school.

2.3.7.6 Industries/Businesses

1. Attend conferences, networking events, and industry events to build contacts and look into possible joint ventures.
2. Develop proposals and effectively align the proposal to the industry's interest.

2.3.7.7 Staff

1. Schedule planning and meeting days. Teachers require ample time to plan without interruptions and for a prolonged period. Dedicate planning time with a clear purpose. Give teachers the opportunity to meet at least once a week for an hour before classes begin.
2. Welcome organization of clubs and activity periods for teaching staff. Occasionally invite all departments and continuously build strong relationships with them through dialogues and productive measures. Discuss their challenges and find remedies for them.
3. Ensure mutual respect and understanding among colleagues. School leaders should find appropriate tools to solve conflict between teachers.

2.3.7.8 Learners

1. There must be a plan for engaging different groups. Students are the most important stakeholders in the school community.
2. Engagement must be regular and meaningful.
3. Minutes of engagement must always be written.
4. Ideas of learners must be respected and implemented where possible to make students feel part of the running of the school.

Groups to be engaged:

- Whole school: The Head must endeavor to use Morning Assembly, four times a week to engage with students. This creates a bond between the Head and student and instills in students a sense of trust.
- Prefectorial Body: Engagement must be built on confidentiality, trust and empowerment.
- Year Groups: Each group has special needs and concerns so the Head must do well to schedule separate meetings with them.
- SRC: At least once a term, there must be engagement with them to hear their concerns. Remind SRC representatives to collate concerns of the members before coming to the meeting. Encourage them to bring contributions that can improve their learning and life in the school and also use the meetings as an opportunity to learn public speaking.

Feedback Form: To solicit the concerns and observations on weekly basis.

Suggestion Box: This could be an innovative way of getting feedback from students. However, this must be used with caution.

2.3.7.9 Mission

This is for faith-based schools. The chair of the Board of Governors is usually a representative of the Mission or the Head of the Mission. The Mission is involved in the appointment of the Head.

1. Engagement with the Mission is termly at the level of the Board where two more representatives of the mission are present. The Head must endeavor to keep the Mission constantly abreast of all the activities of the school in order to get the needed support when he or she encounters problems. As an adherent of the Faith, the Head must participate actively in the activities of the Mission to earn the confidence and trust of the members of the Mission. This will facilitate all other engagements with Mission.
2. Balancing the demands of the mission who are owners of the school, against directives from education authorities can be challenging. Keeping the mission well informed about trends in education in the country, Region and District.

2.3.7.10 Community

The community in which the school is situated is a major stakeholder. The school must position itself as a friend of the community to protect the students who are constantly interacting with them.

1. They must participate in the drawing up of the SIP and appreciated immediately for doing so to ensure their continuous positive response to subsequent invitations.
2. A letter of appreciation must be sent to them and all the stakeholders after any engagement.
3. The students must undertake community services E.g. cleaning exercises in the community, organizing extra classes for BECE candidates, mobile library.
4. Admitting one or two students on affirmative action process from the community can strengthen the relationships.

2.3.8 Expected Impacts of Building Effective Partnerships and Cooperation with Stakeholders

Effective school-stakeholder partnerships provide numerous positive impacts on schools, student and the local community as a whole. By fostering effective partnerships, schools can create a supportive ecosystem that benefits everyone involved, leading to improved learning outcomes. Some of these impacts include:

1. Improved student outcomes: Collaborative efforts lead to better academic performance and enhanced student well-being.
2. Enhanced community engagement: partnerships foster a sense of ownership and responsibility among stakeholders, promoting active involvement in school activities and events.
3. Resource sharing: Stakeholders having clear understanding of the school's vision and goals would willingly contribute resources, expertise and funding to support school initiatives aimed at improving learning outcomes.
4. Increased parental involvement: Parents become more engaged in their child's education, leading to better learner-teacher-parent relationships and improved student motivation.
5. Improved school culture: Partnerships create a positive, inclusive school environment, encouraging respect and social responsibility.

2.4 Action Planning

As a leadership team, you need to identify short-term (annually) actions that you can implement for the school to fully establish school-community partnership that works and lead to improvement in learning outcomes and prepare graduates for world of work, further studies and responsible adult life. Such actions should be captured in your improvement plan to include the use of information communication technologies (ICTs), homecoming for old (former) students, school-community durbars, graduation days and speech and prize giving days.

3.0 Section Two: ICT for Effective Communication with Stakeholders

This section focuses on how the school can use ICT to enhance stakeholder engagement. The section provides information on what ICT tools are within the context of the school, why they are needed, and the various approaches to use ICT including teaching and learning, communication, and monitoring and evaluation.

3.1 What do we regard as ICT tools in schools?

ICT tools include a range of devices such as desktop computers, laptops, mobile phones, smartphones, tablets, projectors, printers, scanners, digital cameras, televisions, and radios. Some of these devices come with pre-installed programmes and applications, while others must be connected to the internet to function. As a school leader, you should try to increase your awareness of technological developments and how they can be used to improve teaching and learning.

3.2. Why is ICT use important?

ICT can impact teaching and learning when teachers are digitally literate and understand how to integrate it in their pedagogical practice.

- The use of ICT can help to improve teaching and learning in the areas of lesson planning, online integration of lessons, assessment of lessons and research and professional development of teachers.
- It provides teachers with a library of relevant and high-quality teaching and learning resources, including open educational resources.
- It can contribute to learners and teachers developing the skills of creativity, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, independent and personal learning, and global citizenship.
- ICT can be used to make lessons inclusive, engaging, and adaptive to ensure that teaching and learning is differentiated, and assistive devices are used by learners who need them. For example, teachers can integrate multimedia tools and elements in their work, which will make lesson delivery and presentation more visual, interactive, and engaging.

The use of ICT in schools cannot be limited to improving teaching and learning. To achieve the overall learning outcomes of learners, schools need to employ ICT in their engagement with stakeholders and the wider community to build and maintain lasting relationships for the benefit of all learners. Social media tools are relevant in this case.

Activity 1

In two groups, using the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education as a case study, discuss why it has become necessary for schools to use ICT in improving effective:

- a. Teaching and learning
- b. Stakeholder engagement

Present your answers for whole-group discussion.

Based on Activity 1 above, the importance of ICT use in teaching and learning and for stakeholder engagement is highlighted below.

3.2.1 The importance of ICT use in improving effective teaching and learning

- ICT use enables different and effective methods of lesson delivery.
- It has the potential to influence how, what, and why teachers teach and how, what, and why learners learn.
- It helps learners adapt to changing conditions and engage in lifelong learning.
- It helps learners become innovative, creative, and competitive in the national and global space.
- The use of new digital tools enables different learners, including students with special educational needs, to learn in different ways.
- ICT and digital devices have the potential to bring about improvements in learning outcomes.
- It has a wide range of applications in teaching (it can be applied in lesson preparation and presentation), learning (it provides access to digital learning materials, such as textbooks and journals), documentation, student assessment, student records, stocktaking, research (online libraries) and financial management.

3.2.2 The importance of ICT use in improving stakeholder engagement

- ICT use improves general communication in the school.
- It allows a wide range of stakeholders to be reached.
- It is a cost-effective means of engaging with stakeholders.
- It provides real-time engagement.
- It is increasingly becoming a trusted platform for wide engagement.

3.3. Communication approaches and tools for building and maintaining interdependent relationships with stakeholders

- social media
- digital presence—using official websites or social media pages for the dissemination of information
- collaborative online/offline tools for meetings, discussions, working on documents, information dissemination and other tasks
- local information centres
- traditional media for information dissemination, such as television, radio or print media announcements
- posters, letters, billboards, signs, notice boards, digital billboards, etc.
- functional devices for voice, visual and data communication:
 - voice communication—telephone/mobile phone for official correspondence
 - visual communication—YouTube, Zoom Cloud, Google Meet, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, billboards
 - data communication—emails, SMSs, Telegram, WhatsApp, websites, Twitter, Facebook

Activity 2

Regarding the stakeholders identified in the earlier discussion, what inclusive ICT tools can be used for effective communication among them to achieve improved learning outcomes for all learners?

3.3.1. ICT tools for effective communication with stakeholders and the wider community

To lead and build a very effective relationship with the community and stakeholders, a variety of ICT tools can be used for collaborative activities such as meetings, discussions, documentation, information dissemination and other tasks. Different tools may be required depending on the types of stakeholders that school leaders intend to engage with. It is therefore important for school leaders to know the type of communication approach to adopt for them to select the appropriate ICT tools for effective communication. The types of communication approaches listed in Figure 2 can help in selecting appropriate ICT tools.

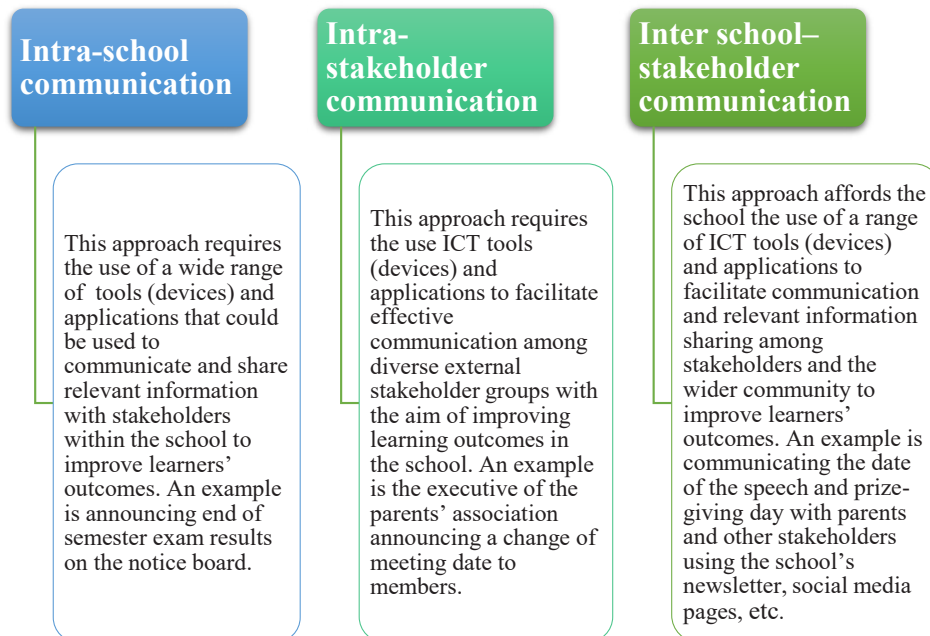


Figure 3: Types of communication approaches

Activity 3

In plenary, discuss how the ICT tools listed in the table below can be used to improve communication among stakeholders.

3.3.2 ICT tools to improve communication among stakeholders

| ICT tool | Inter school– stakeholder | Intra-school (internal) | Intra-stakeholder (external) |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Computer | | | |
| Telephone (mobile phone) | | | |
| Website | | | |
| Facebook page | | | |
| Twitter handle | | | |
| Instagram | | | |
| WhatsApp | | | |
| Telegram | | | |
| Zoom Cloud | | | |
| Google Meet | | | |
| TikTok | | | |
| Email | | | |
| Skype | | | |
| SMS | | | |
| Microsoft Word | | | |
| Microsoft PowerPoint | | | |
| Microsoft Excel | | | |
| Siren | | | |
| Radio | | | |
| Learning management system | | | |
| Digital billboard | | | |
| Television | | | |
| Braille machine | | | |
| Video/audio recorder | | | |
| Hearing aid | | | |
| Printer | | | |
| Public address system/ speaker | | | |
| YouTube | | | |
| Newsletter | | | |

3.3.3. How do we ensure the use of ICT for inclusive and effective teaching and learning?

Activity 4

Read the two case studies below in which ICT is used as part of a lesson. As you read each one, make notes on the positives and negatives of the teacher’s approach to technology for discussion in plenary.

Case study 1

Mr A's school has just installed digital projectors and all staff are being encouraged to use them in their classes. Mr A is not very happy about this as he is not experienced in using technology but decides that he will make a PowerPoint presentation for his next English lesson. He is teaching past simple tense irregular verbs, so he makes a table with two columns—one for the infinitive and one for the past tense—and puts it on some PowerPoint slides.

In the classroom, he projects the PowerPoint document and tells his students to copy the table into their notebooks in silence. It is quite difficult for the students at the back to see the information on the slides, but Mr A is a very strict teacher, and they are nervous about telling him, so they say nothing.

While the students are copying the slides, the teacher sits at his desk looking at his laptop. He realises that he has made two mistakes on the first slide: blow/blowed and hurt/hurted. He quickly moves onto the next slide, although most of the students have not finished copying the first slide. He sees another mistake on the second slide (ring/runged). He quickly switches off the laptop and tells the students to open their books and do the exercise on page 21.

Case study 2

Mrs B works in the same school. She has a different approach to using technology compared to her colleague and wants to use it to get her students talking to each other. She chooses pictures that she has found online showing the life cycle of a frog. She shows her students the pictures by connecting her phone to the projector. Mrs B puts her students in groups of four and explains that the pictures have been mixed up and are in the wrong order. In their groups, they must reorganise the pictures and then write down the life cycle.

As the students are working, Mrs B moves around the classroom, helping different groups of students with any problems they are having. She is surprised to see that one of the quickest students is a very quiet boy who does not often take part in class activities. When all the groups have finished, she asks his group to put the pictures into the right sequence. When the class has agreed that this is correct, she brings different students to the board to check that all the students understand and can spell the key vocabulary.

Discussion questions:

1. How could Mr A use ICT tools in a more learner-focused way to encourage active learning?
2. How does Mrs B's approach to the use of ICT differ from the approach taken by Mr A?

What are the strengths of Mrs B's activity? In groups, discuss the possible ways that ICT can be used effectively to improve teaching and learning for all learners, including students with special educational needs.

As a school leader, you could adopt the following measures in your school to ensure effective teaching and learning for all learners.

3.3.3.1 Leading staff capacity development on the use of ICT

It is possible that some of your staff need help to acquire basic skills such as using a mouse or opening and closing documents. Your challenge as a school leader is to give them the confidence to see the use of ICT as something that will help them in their work, which is the first step in using ICT as a tool. Providing regular capacity building workshops to improve the computer literacy of staff can serve as a tool for inclusive and effective pedagogical practice. UNESCO's framework outlining the three successive stages or levels of a teacher's development in making use of ICT can be adopted by the school to achieve this objective:

| Stage | Teacher's competences to be acquired or developed | Impact on learners |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| Knowledge acquisition | Knowledge about using technology and basic ICT competences | Use ICT to be effective learners |
| Knowledge deepening | ICT competences that are conducive to creating learner-centred learning environments | Develop higher order thinking and problem-solving skills |
| Knowledge creation | Competences that encourage them to model good practice and set up the learning environment | Create the kind of new knowledge required for a more harmonious, fulfilling and prosperous society |

Source: UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (UNESCO, 2018)

Regularly organising capacity building workshops on ICT can help your staff to:

- develop key ICT skills
- use ICT to develop and improve pedagogical skills
- use ICT to enhance collaborative skills
- use ICT to support professional development

3.3.3.2 Liaising with stakeholders to ensure the availability of ICT resources for use

In the school, the leadership through effective stakeholder engagement can mobilise ICT resources such as:

- gender equality and social inclusion (GESI)-responsive computer laboratories
- GESI-responsive computers/laptops
- projectors
- teaching and learning applications (software)
- internet accessibility
- braille machines
- hearing aids
- tablets/mobile phones

3.3.3.4 Providing maintenance and support

Maintenance and support have ongoing costs but should be considered by school leaders as part of the culture necessary to ensure the effective use of ICT to improve outcomes for all learners.

- This responsibility could be allocated to a member of staff who has appropriate knowledge and skills.
- There may be a need to secure volunteers to help.

- It may be necessary to lobby or buy these services from appropriate stakeholders in partnership with the school at a subsidised fee.

Maintenance, which includes monitoring patterns in the use of applications or equipment, can be provided by people who are part of the school system or are brought in. Specific maintenance items might include:

- periodic replacement of parts and renewal of consumable supplies
- repair or replacement of faulty components
- periodic inspection and cleaning of equipment
- updating or upgrading both hardware and software, including installing new operating system versions
- adding or deleting users from a system, or modifying user rights and properties
- periodic back-up of stored files on a school network
- monitoring the condition and functionality of equipment and networks
- installing and removing equipment and applications

ICT support is about working with users rather than on equipment and systems. Support keeps users working or helps them to improve the ways in which they work.

Adapted from the National Centre for Education Statistics, 2003

3.4 Spreading good news

School stakeholders need to spread the good news about their school. They want to hear discussions in their communities about staff commitment to work, improved student performance and the structures available in the school that support every learner to succeed.

Activity 5

With reference to Abodzum SHTS, imagine that school performance has significantly improved. Discuss in groups how:

- a. this news could be made
- b. this news could be spread, leading to an improved image of the school.

Your school can make good news for itself if:

- every stakeholder is committed to working towards the improvement of the school;
- regular monitoring of the implementation of SIPs and general school programmes and activities is carried out;
- regular evaluation is done through the appraisal of staff, students and every stakeholder;
- regular stakeholder discussions about improvement strategies are held;
- impressive performance of all categories of students in WASSCE is achieved; and
- a zero/low rate of student dropout at the school is achieved.

Schools can spread good news using both ICT and traditional means, such as:

- social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, school website and YouTube);
- community radio discussions;

- school speech and prize-giving days;
- community information centre; and
- meetings of students, staff and boards and school–community town hall meetings.

4.0 Section Three: School Improvement Planning and System for Internal Quality Assurance

This section of the handbook revisits the review, revision and development of school improvement plan and the process of school improvement planning. Therefore, the information provided under this section is a highlight of key process areas with the understanding that the previous three modules must be used in tandem with this one.

4.1 Leading monitoring, evaluation and reporting concerning the implementation of SIPs

Activity 6

Let us consider the following scenario to better understand the topics of this discussion.

Scenario 11: Abodzum SHTS science teacher 'B'

Science teacher B of Abodzum SHTS had the habit of being absent from school without this being noticed by his Head of Department (HoD). He was always the first to present lesson notes and examination questions with marking schemes for vetting. He made sure he was present at every staff meeting. Departmental meetings did not take place often as both the HoD and the Head of School saw such departmental meetings as duplications of staff meetings and a waste of time and other resources. His students' performances were often below expectations, with less than half of them scoring 50% or more in the end of semester examinations. This poor performance led to mass student dropout, with the majority of them coming from disadvantaged groups. When asked by his HoD about the reasons for the poor performance of his students, his answers mostly centred on the inadequate commitment of the students to their studies and a lack of teaching and learning resources. Poor performance by the students in both internal and external (WASSCE) examinations created a poor image for Abodzum SHTS. There had never been a forum to discuss the trend of low performance of the school. Thus, the situation persisted, affecting the WASSCE results of the school for four consecutive years.

In groups, discuss possible reasons for the poor performance of the students. Write your answers on the sticky pads and post for observation.

Groups should brainstorm and explain monitoring in their own ways and put their answers on flipchart boards.

4.2. Definitions of key concepts: monitoring, evaluation, and reporting

In the school context, **monitoring** is defined as routine tracking of data and information to learn about the extent to which the implementation of the school curriculum, activities and general school life are progressing towards the achievement of the goals and objectives of the school. It entails a set of follow-up activities meant to ascertain the progress being made in every aspect of the implementation of SIPs. These follow-up activities are key to ensuring that the objectives of change creation are being achieved. Relevant questions can be asked during the monitoring activities to guide the processes. For example:

- Is the intervention on track or on budget (inputs and activities)?
- Are plans being executed as expected?
- Are all stakeholders involved as planned?
- Are all stakeholders performing their roles as planned?
- Is the intervention bringing the desired change (output)?

Activity 7

With reference to the scenario on Abodzum SHTS teacher B, what, in your opinion, could have been done by the school to address the situation?

Evaluation in this context is the systematic collection of information on the implementation of the SIP to determine whether success has been achieved.

- It ascertains whether the inputs and activities of the SIP have produced the expected results.
- It is usually done during the middle of the implementation of the SIP and again at the end of implementation (summative evaluation). This means that the evaluation needs to be done at the end of each semester (or term, where applicable) and at the end of the school's academic year.
- Ex-post evaluation could also be done to assess the impact of the SIP after implementation. This evaluation will indicate whether the activities and interventions of the SIP have achieved what they were intended to achieve (output, outcome and impact).

Questions that could be asked to guide the process of evaluation include:

- Have the interventions achieved the desired results?
- Have the necessary impacts been made?
- What was done right?
- What was not done right?
- What could be improved on?
- What lessons have been learnt in the process of SIP implementation?

Achievement of the SIP results is based on the performance of key activities. These activities include all those that every stakeholder group must carry out for the goals and objectives of the SIP to be realised. An example is providing GESI-responsive training for board members, teachers, the general student body and their leadership (supervision, marking of register, conduct of assessment and record keeping).

In the implementation of SIPs, output is key to determining results. Output refers to which resources are provided and what activities are undertaken. Examples of output include materials distributed, the number of students taught, the amount of stakeholder training done and the type of training delivered, among others.

Output must lead to the attainment of outcomes. Outcomes refer to changes that occur among stakeholders both immediately and sometime after the SIP activities are completed. Examples are changes in knowledge, behaviour, attitude, and skills; the acceptance of all stakeholders; inclusive decision-making; effective and efficient use of resources; the provision of GESI-responsive improved resources for teaching and learning purposes; improved learning outcomes; and improved use of ICT tools for teaching, learning and stakeholder engagement.

Impact must be conspicuously seen after the implementation of SIPs. Impact is the wider effect of the programme on long-term results. Here, change is clearly observed, for instance, in improved student performance or the quality of leadership (improved stakeholder participation and engagement, school ethos, etc.)

Reporting refers to giving information to all stakeholders about the results that have been achieved from the SIP implementation and other activities of the school. These pieces of information are gathered through supervision, monitoring and evaluation exercises. Such information may include the following: successes and achievements, impact made on the school, what contributed to success or failure and lessons learnt from the implementation of the SIP.

Activity 8

With reference to the scenario on Abodzom SHTS, discuss and share in your groups some appropriate means by which:

- science teacher B could have been prevented from habitual absenteeism
- the performance of science teacher B's students could have been improved
- the school performance in WASSCE could have been improved
- the dropout rate of students, including disadvantaged groups, could have been reduced

Based on the activity above, while still in your groups, identify the processes involved in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and write your answers on a flipchart paper for observation.

4.3. How should M&E be done in the school?

The following are some of the ways in which schools can monitor and evaluate the implementation of their SIPs with a GESI lens:

- conduct meetings with stakeholders to achieve buy-in for M&E
- develop an M&E plan based on stakeholder buy-in
- implement the M&E plan
 - periodically supervise the activities of various stakeholders
 - conduct a 360° appraisal of the institution using the seven quality assurance parameters spelt out in the SIP
 - periodically assess students' performance
- report to GES officials and the respective communities

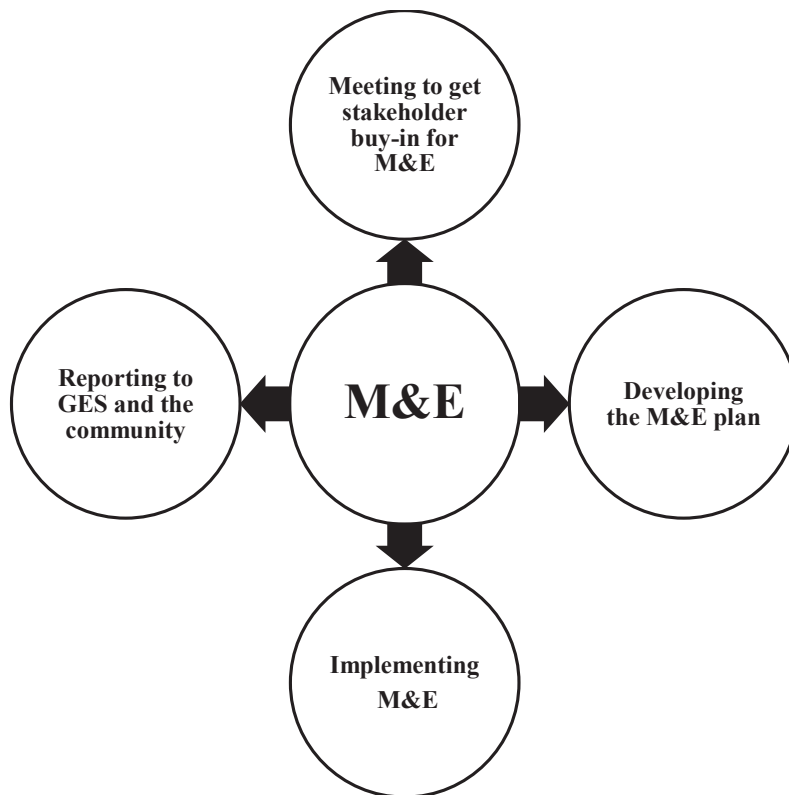


Figure 3: M&E of SIP implementation/other programmes of the school

4.4 What should be the nature of an inclusive M&E plan?

Activity 9

In plenary, discuss what you would consider in developing an inclusive M&E plan.

A good M&E plan should outline the quality indicators to be monitored and indicate the activities envisaged for each indicator. It should also spell out the persons to lead the process, when, how and where the activity should take place and the resources required. There is also a need to indicate how successful the implementation activity was. Below is a simple template to guide you.

Activity 10

In smaller groups, discuss how M&E findings can be communicated.

4.5. Key performance indicators for conducting M&E in the implementation of SIPs

The key indicators that should be monitored and evaluated for positive change include the following:

4.5.1 Improved leadership and management

- well-aligned motto, mission and vision of the school to drive excellence;

- good governance (transparency; accountability; participation; harmony; positive attitudes to work and learning; and a healthy, safe and serene environment that creates a functional school society give a clear indication of good governance);
- robust and rigorous QA systems (acceptable standards are observed in all activities);
- visible leadership (the work of every leader is done in time and to the expected standard);
- prudent financial management systems (value, quality results and quality products are achieved from every expenditure);
- inclusive (efficient) resource management systems (everyone must pay attention to the allocation of resources and the prevention of waste in using the school's resources);
- GESI-sensitive recruitment, supervision and mentorship;
- internal school policies are in place for the creation of positive change in all sectors of the school;
- student feedback records (students appraise teaching and other activities of the school, and the results of these appraisals are available in records);
- staff CPD plans are in place (this forms part of the institution-wide programme to satisfy the Pre-tertiary Teacher Professional Development and Management mandate in helping teachers upgrade their skills, knowledge and practice); and
- easy access to library, ICT laboratory and other facilities to improve learning (students are not prevented from using laboratories because of fears that they will spoil the facilities or because no teacher or attendant is present).

4.5.2 Improved student engagement

- a GESI-sensitive student engagement policy is operational at the school;
- student orientation services/systems are in place, covering GESI and leadership issues;
- academic support/advisory/guidance and counselling systems are in place (appointment and service provision should be GESI responsive);
- students participate in decision-making about issues concerning their welfare (the inclusivity of student committees, including gender representation and the participation of disadvantaged groups, is considered); and
- the decisions of the student representative council are integrated in school-wide activities related to general school life (this makes the SIP an all-inclusive plan in which every sector feels that they have an important role to play in developing the school).

4.5.3 Improved teaching and learning

- the quality of teaching and learning is GESI responsive;
- the overall quality of learners' achievement is improved;
- all learners achieve quality learning outcomes;
- the qualifications of every staff member are improved;
- regular professional development activities cover all staff (female, male and disadvantaged);
- regular feedback is provided to learners for improvement in learning;
- appraisal of teaching and learning by learners/student feedback records are available;
- improved ICT use in lesson planning, delivery and research;

- GESI and ICT are integrated in lesson planning, delivery and assessment;
- school feedback records are available (all stakeholder feedback to the school is kept and used to guide improvement processes of the school); and
- student information systems and record-keeping for easy reference by students are designed to help build portfolios of all students.

4.5.4 Improved assessment regime

- an internal assessment policy that considers the needs of every learner is operational in the school;
- internal controls for assessment are available to ensure conformity (a well-laid-out assessment plan helps every teacher do what is expected in preparing continuous assessment marks for every student);
- processes of appeal and mitigation for any assessment challenges are clearly set out and are followed to ensure inclusivity; and
- the diversity of assessment is ensured to support disadvantaged groups.

4.5.5 Improved partnership and collaboration

- inter-class, subject-specific collaboration that focuses on the participation of all learners, with evidence of records;
- intra- and inter-departmental and school partnerships for the exchange of ideas; and
- external stakeholder involvement records are available, with evidence of memoranda of understanding.

4.5.6 Improved environment and school infrastructure

- laboratories with GESI-responsive teacher–learner resources are available to support effective curriculum delivery;
- at least one Health post is available and operational in the school; and
- GESI-friendly campus-wide learning environment, including the presence of ramps/walkways for easy access by people with disabilities, safe dormitories and decent and secure washrooms.

4.6 Improving reporting in the school system

Improving reporting in the school system should be a genuine concern of every educational leader and team. Reporting the progress in implementing SIPs is key to realising the objectives and general development of each school. The following are some of the reporting systems that could be adopted:

- regular stakeholder meetings
 - unit/departmental level meetings
 - town hall community/school-wide meetings
 - institutional staff meetings
 - PTA meetings
 - school board meetings
- management meetings
- regular submission of reports to the headquarters of the Ghana Education Service and its district/municipal and regional representatives

Annexure

Annex 1: Sample M&E Template

| Quality indicator: | | Remarks |
|--------------------|--|---------|
| What activity? | | |
| Who? | | |
| When? | | |
| How? | | |
| Where? | | |
| What resources? | | |

Annex 2: Sample of Simple Reporting Template

Name of school:

Student population: F () M () SEN () Total =

Staff population: Teaching: F () M () SEN () Total =

Non-teaching: F () M () SEN () Total =

Total population =

| Name of programmes | Student population | Performance in internal examinations | | | Performance in external examinations | | | External prizes won by the school in the period | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|---|----|--------------------------------------|---|----|---|----|---|
| | | BA | A | AA | BA | A | AA | S | St | H |
| | | | | | | | | | | |

Key: F (female), M (male), SEN (special educational needs), BA (below average), A (average), AA (above average), S (student), St (staff), H (Head of School)

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