

# ***SHIFSD***

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## **SHIFSD/IBIS REPORT ON BASELINE SURVEY**

### ***THE STATE OF EDUCATION-THE BUDUBURAM REFUGEE SETTLEMENT***

Version 1

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# TABLE OF CONTENT

**TABLE OF CONTENT2**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT3**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY4**

**CHAPTER ONE – BACKGROUND4**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION5**

**1.1 Purpose**Error! Bookmark not defined.

**CHAPTER TWO - METHODOLOGY7**

**2.0 METHODOLOGY7**

**CHAPTER THREE – STATE OF EDUCATION AT THE CAMP8**

**3.0 Findings and Analysis8**

3.1 Parent – centered survey8

3.2 Child–Centered Survey9

3.3 Stakeholders' Perspectives:10

**CHAPTER FOUR - OUT-OF-SCHOOL-CHILDREN AT BUDUBURAM16**

**4.0 Factors Responsible for Out-of- School-Children16**

**CHAPTER FIVE-CONCLUSION:18**

**APPENDIX- 120**

**Student Enrolment by School/ Sex for Second Term – 2004/200520**

Pre-Primary School20

Pre-Primary and Primary Schools20

Pre-Primary, Primary and JSS Schools20

Primary and JSS Schools21

Pre-Primary, Primary, JSS & SSS21

Primary, JSS & SSS21

Student Population Statistics by Grade and Sex22

**SUMMARY23**

**SOURCE: BUDUBURAM CENTRAL EDUCATION BOARD 2004/2005APPENDIX 223**

**APPENDIX 224**

**BASELINE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE (Parent – Centered)24**

**APPENDIX 325**

**BASELINE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE (Child-Centered)25**

**APPENDIX 426**

**BASELINE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE (Stakeholders)26**

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## Executive Summary

The primary aim of the two weeks of concomitant random data collection, and focus group discussions was to ascertain accurate information about the general state of education at the settlement coupled with reasons for children of school going age not being in school. The data collection, focus group discussions and analysis were characterized by an atmosphere of objectivity and openness.

Originally established on a 140-acre parcel of land to cater to not more than 5,000 refugees, the Buduburam Refugee Settlement is today congested with more than 5,000 dwelling units and a population well over 42,000. Children constitute an estimated 36% of the refugee population. The Settlement is divided into twelve zones and is supervised by a Government of Ghana designated Settlement Manager who is assisted by the Liberian Refugee Welfare Council.

The survey showed that the quality of education in terms of school management and performance at the settlement is indeed less impressive. It was recommended among others that appropriate and timely measures necessary to improve the quality of education in the settlement particularly at the basic primary levels be put in place. However, this document in no way suggests to be conclusive but intends to serve as a basis for further research and a guide to education program developers as it relates to education for refugees at the Buduburam Refugee Settlement and their role in the Liberian Reconstruction Process.

The difficulties confronting the refugee schools highlighted by the discussants include: lack of comprehensive in-service teachers training programs, lack of resource centers; poor monitoring and supervision plus gross managerial incompetence. The psyche of obsession for resettlement overwhelms parents to the extent that most of them place their children education off their priority list while teachers and headmasters leave teaching in search of better empowerment opportunities including resettlement. The grim nature of the situation in the schools calls for efficient counseling and empowerment programs for teachers, students, administrators, parents and the community at large.

Generally, the question of survival constitutes the most overriding preoccupation of constituents at the settlement. Many of the households are headed by single parents, mostly women, who lack employable skills and employment opportunities. This adversely affects the ability of parents and teachers alike to cope with the rising cost of living; thus, paving the way for neglecting education and turning children into bread winners for the family and the adoption of very risky behaviors.

# Chapter One – Background

## 1.0 Introduction

The Buduburam Refugee Camp was established in 1990 in Gomoa District, Central Region of Ghana to host Liberian refugees escaping from the protracted armed conflict which erupted in December 1989. Since the inception of the camp the population has grown to more than 40,000 according to UNHCR's estimate. Originally established on a 140-acre parcel of land to cater to not more than 5,000 refugees, the camp is today congested with more than 5,000 dwelling units. Children constitute an estimated 36% of the refugee population.

The Settlement is divided into twelve Zones and is supervised by a government of Ghana designated Settlement Manager who is assisted by the Liberian Refugee Welfare Council. The Welfare Council serves as liaison between the refugees and the Government of Ghana through the Settlement Management. Oversight responsibility of matters on education at the camp is channeled through the Central Education Board, which coordinates and supervises education for the refugees.

According to the statistics available at the Central Education Board, there are 42 registered schools operating under their supervision. Of these there are only two GES conditionally recognized senior secondary schools at the settlement (i.e. the camp). Religious bodies, the refugee community and private individuals run these schools, which need to scale-up to meet GES set standards. The UNHCR is the lead organization supporting refugees' education. However, this support is limited amidst the challenging state of education in the camp.

The total enrollment for the first term of 2004/2005 academic year is 13,142. For 2003/2004 the enrollment figure was 13,938. Out of this number, 796 students dropped out of the school system between 2003/04 and 2004/05 academic years. Notably, between 2004/2005 first and second terms, 1,435 pupils have dropped out of the Buduburam Refugee school system. Some of these dropped outs have either traveled abroad or returned to Liberia. This considerable drop-out rate has been attributed mainly to the inability of parents as well as self-sponsored students to pay school fees and at the same time cover feeding expenses. Also, existing classrooms in the various schools are highly congested. The ratio of student to classroom on the average is 65:1 while in very few instances up to 130 students to 1 classroom. It was also noted that these classrooms are not of the normal classroom size as they are very small in most cases. This presents a grim reality of the harsh learning conditions at the camp.

Inadequate instructional materials further compound the problem. Also realized were the lacks of school feeding programmes, textbooks, and inefficient school administration. Student-to-teacher ratio is reportedly 90:1, with debatably 21% untrained teachers. Generally, the level of educational services for the refugee children is inefficient and inadequate in comparison to GES standards. There are 42 academic schools in the camp and 7 vocational schools. There are also 552 teachers in total and of this number 153 are women. Of this number, 496 teachers are refugees while 56 are non-refugees. By refugee standards, 438 of the total number of teachers are trained while 114 are said to be untrained. Many of these teachers, either trained or untrained have since become inactive.

It is against this background that Ibis-West Africa commissioned SHIFSD to undertake a baseline survey in February 2005 at the Buduburam Refugee Camp to ascertain the status of education at the camp. The survey sought to gather information on out-of-school children; accessibility, quality of education in the camp; and what pertains in the schools in terms of good governance and the overall performance in schools at the camp. Information thus gathered will inform critical decision on the implementation of Ibis-West Africa Education in Emergency situation project at the camp.

## **1.1 Purpose**

The main purpose of the baseline survey was to appreciate the status of education at the Buduburam Refugee Buduburam Camp in terms of quality, delivery, good governance in schools and the factors leading to 'out-of-school' children. On account of the relevant information gathered at the parent-centered, child-centered and focus groups discussion levels Ibis-West Africa in partnership with SHIFSD and other stakeholders would develop a implementation plan with the aim to enhancing quality, improved performance as well as address the plight of out-of-school-children in line with the Ibis Education for Empowerment (EfE) / Education in Emergency (EfE) Program.

### **1.1.2 Objectives:**

- Detail reasons leading to 'out-of-school-children' on the camp;
- Ascertain the level of service delivery in the educational sector in terms of quality and management;
- Determine the effectiveness of supervision and monitoring of the schools;
- Assess the role of Parent-Teacher-Associations, Central Education Board and various stakeholders in the education service of Buduburam Camp
- Document findings of the survey to inform the implementation of Ibis-West Africa project for 'Education in Emergency situation'.

### **1.2 Limitation of the Baseline Survey**

There were few limitations with respect to the conduct of the baseline survey, and key amongst them was that the surveyors could not reach the GES authority at the Apam District for their views regarding the state of education in the settlement due to serious time constraints. The two-week of allotted time frame for the survey was quite insufficient.

## Chapter Two - Methodology

### 2.0 Methodology

A combination of participatory approaches was used in order to get a lot of ideas and views from a cross section of residents. The aim was for the people of the camp to own the process and also identify themselves with whatever comes out of it.

Two meetings were held in the month of January 2005 at the Central Education Board office during which key stakeholders, including Ibis, SHIFSD, Liberia Refugee Welfare Council, and some school administrators as well as heads of religious bodies helped to evolve the questionnaires to conduct the baseline survey. This was done with a view to reflect a broad spectrum of opinions on the status of education in the camp.

The outcome of these meetings was the preparation of three separate sets of questionnaires: Child-centered, Parent-centered and focus groups questionnaires. Also, a team of five data collectors were recruited from SHIFSD and the Central Education Board and trained to administer the questionnaires. The survey employed the use of both quantitative and qualitative techniques using both 'opened and closed-ended questions' in the process of information-gathering. The interviews of the children were done during school hours to enable the surveyor's find out the children who were not in school.

Interviews and focus group discussions were the two main techniques employed in gathering information from children, parents and stakeholders. Members of the Ibis/SHIFSD team conducted focus group discussions with various stakeholders, including the executives and staff of the Central Education Board, some school administrators, leadership of the Camp Management and the Liberia Refugee Welfare Council, Parent-Teacher-Associations, Women's groups, Zonal heads, and Youth groups. Although invitation was extended to the County Heads and members of the Buduburam Ministerial Council, they could not be available.

The focus group discussions sought to ascertain the quality and delivery processes in the area of education at the Buduburam Camp, extent of good governance in the schools, reasons for out-of-school-children. Also the roles of stakeholders such as the Ghana Education Service, the Buduburam Central Education Board, teachers, PTAs, School administrators, and pupils were also assessed. Data collection lasted for a period of two weeks, while the focus group lasted for about a week with one or two meetings a day.

## Chapter Three – State of Education at the Camp

### 3.0 Findings and Analysis

#### 3.1 Parent – centered survey

At the end of the exercise on February 15, 2005, 377 children have been interviewed along with 146 parents representing households (i.e. 146 household heads). The survey was conducted randomly in all the twelve Zones of the refugee camp. The sample size of 533 (that is 146 parents, or household heads, and 377 children) is adequate to analyze the trend of education for children in–and–out of school within the Buduburam Refugee Settlement.

“Household”, for the purpose of this survey is characterized as being the number of people living within a given house. More specifically, household is described as the number of individuals that are under the care of (or supported by) the household head (s). The age range of household heads is between 18 years and 72 years. Of those interviewed six household heads were below the age of 21 years and three above the age of 65 years. On the whole, 116 or (79%) were females and 30 or (21%) were males. Additionally, 58 (38%) of household heads are engaged in petty trading for living, 7 (5%) receive remittances from relatives and friends from abroad, and the bulk of them (57%) are not engaged in any productive activity as a source of income.

Within the households, 89.7% of the children of school-going age interviewed were not going to school and 10.3% were currently going to school. 87.2% are reported to have been to school at one point or another in the past. As for the reason for out-of-school-children, the majority of parents or guardians indicated that it was due mainly to financial problems (lack of money, lack of financial assistance).

These problems render them incapable of sending their children to school. Given the high number of female headed household, it is interesting to note and highlight how vulnerable women and children are with in the settlement and how adversely the Liberian Civil War has actually affected the family system. These single parents, most of whom are women and between the ages of 21-45, have to cater for a huge family size, which includes their own siblings, those of relatives, their grand children and the elderly.

Amidst the extremely difficult situation coupled with the challenge of neither jobs nor employable skills, constrained parents and guardians tend to prioritize most the survival question as compared to their children or wards’ education. Of course, some do recognize the value of education, but when it comes to choosing between survival and education, this group constitutes a high percentage of those who either cannot send their wards or retain them in school.

Regarding performance of schools at the Buduburam Refugee Camp, opinions though varied remained divided along two main lines. Some parents were relatively satisfied with the schools’ efforts, but expressed the need for regular training for teachers, capacity building for school administrators, and orientation workshops for PTAs, school administrators and teachers as well as motivational support to schools.

On the other hand, there were those who are totally dissatisfied with the general performance of the schools and this included both teachers and students. Some concerns raised by parents and guardians were the increasing “daily” financial demands coming from both teachers and school administrators, and exorbitant tuition fees as well as related cost such as uniforms, books, lunch money, toiletries, and the gross inadequacy of qualified and committed teachers. The need for comprehensive teacher trainings and regular supervision of schools including the establishment of school feeding and counseling programs were also consistently stressed.

### 3.1.1 Parent-Centered Data Summary

Age Range		Gender		Household Size
	Frequency	Male	Female	
18 – 21	6	-	6	42
21 – 35	76	12	64	469
35 – 45	43	14	29	284
45 – 55	11	-	11	94
55 – 65	7	4	3	69
65 – 75	3	-	3	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>976</b>

### 3.2 Child-Centered Survey

As already stated, a total number of 377 children were randomly interviewed using the child-centered questionnaire with 39 children (10.3%) currently going to school. Out of the total number of children interviewed, 329 children (87.2%) have been to school at one point or another in the past.

About (67%) that is 251 of the children were found to be living with their biological parents. Given the extended family system, which is strongly practiced among the refugees, the surveyors reckoned the number of biological children questionable. This is due to the fact that many of the interviewees found it difficult to separate their dependants (e.g. in some cases, the interviewees insisted that their grandchildren were their biological children) from fostered children.

A total of 126 children (33%) were classified as unaccompanied, orphaned or abandoned, and they constitute the most vulnerable group. This group was observed to be in the majority of children not going to school in the settlement. The 126 mentioned comprised of 87 (23%) of kids living with relatives, 22(6%) living with foster parents, 10(3%) living with friends and 7(2%) living alone.

In terms of the gender disparity of the data collected, it can be seen that out of 39 children currently going to school 27 children (69.2%) are males while 12 children (30.8%) are females. As for students currently out-of-school, 172 males out of a total of 338 out-of-school children (50.9%) were discovered to be out-of-school, while 166 female children (49.1%) were not attending school.

Although given collected data, the number of out-of-school females is comparable to the number of out-of-school males; according to the chair of the BCEB, statistics available showed that the number of males in school is more than twice as high as the total number of females in school as pupils move from junior secondary to the senior secondary school levels.

A total of 365 (97 %) of child respondents cited financial constraints as the overwhelming reason for being out of school. They reported that their families could not meet the cost of school fees. This is similar to

reasons proffered by parents for the non-attendance of their children. Other reasons given by the children for not attending schools are teen-age pregnancy; peer pressures and streetism; lack of parental guidance; war trauma; some children have turned breadwinners for their families while others work to support themselves by engaging in petty trading as a source of income. For others, they are just not interested in education or lack faith in the schools. Besides, other children saw the schools to be very boring as there are no recreational activities necessary to make students want to attend. Some blatantly put it, as being old-fashioned and complete waste of time and “poor performance at the end of it all”, one student said.

### 3.2.1 Child – Centered Data Summary

Age Range	Children Interview	Gender		Going to School	Not going to School
		Male	Female		
0 –12	185	103	82	16	169
13 – 18	178	89	89	20	159
Above 18	14	7	7	3	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>338</b>

### 3.2.2 Gender Division among Child Respondents:

Gender	Going to School	Not going to School
Male (199)	27	172
Female (178)	12	166
<b>TOTAL (377)</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>338</b>

### 3.3 Stakeholders’ Perspectives:

*The survey recognized that education cannot be tackled in isolation and therefore considered the critical role of all stakeholders in the Buduburam Settlement toward addressing the question of quality, delivery and governance in schools as well as out-of-school-children.*

*To ensure a diverse input, the survey recognized stakeholders as key to the collective interest of the settlement and also as opinion leaders crucial to determining the way forward. These stakeholders sought to review, discuss and analyze the general trend of education in the Buduburam Settlement.*

*Their perspectives acknowledged the roles and shortcomings of the UNHCR, Central Education Board, Camp Management, Liberia Refugee Welfare Council, Women’s Groups, the Youth, School Administrators and teachers as far as the state of education in the settlement was concerned.*

*It must be stated that the atmosphere during the various stakeholders’ meetings generated a platform for openness, critical analysis and constructive contributions with a view of bringing about quality, delivery, performance and adopting a holistic approach to the situation of out-of-school-children and the performance of schools in general. The various headings emerged from the educational strives, problems,*

*constraints and/or challenges which cuts across all the Buduburam Refugee Schools, and which were brought to the fore during the different focus group discussions.*

### **3.3.1 Focus Group Discussions**

On the overall state of education at the camp, stakeholders at the various discussion levels acknowledged that the quality of education at Buduburam is indeed poor in terms of content, delivery, supervision and monitoring as well as performance. Stakeholders' observations pointed to the fact that virtually all the schools are faced with similar problems ranging from unqualified teachers, improper placement of instructional staff, low or no salaries, lack of resource centers and prescribed textbooks.

Stakeholder observed with serious concern imbalances in the mode of instruction from school to school. This was as a result of inadequacies on the part of schools to adhere to GES approved curriculums and syllabuses with the aim to ensuring uniformity across the board.

Also mentioned were the acute problems of classrooms congestion coupled with obsession for migration (resettlement), harsh financial realities confronting most parents, structural limitations on the part of the Central Education Board and sheer neglect on the part of some parents to complement the role of the teachers and schools. Most schools also place teachers at any level whether they have the qualification or not. There are instances stakeholders contend; where structures housing two to three classrooms are being used and referred to as Primary, JSS, or SSS. Worse still, the personnel do not really matter to those who in fact set up these schools.

It was noted during the focus groups discussions that the emergency-related strategies adopted to address the deplorable state of education in the Buduburam Refugee Environments have been borne chiefly out of the perspective that refugees would soon return to their home countries. This projection most often tends not to be the case. However, despite the prolonged stay of refugees, the mechanism and structures relevant to improved learning remain a crisis-type of short-term approach. This accordingly had and continues to adversely hamper the state of education in Buduburam camp. Stakeholders pointed out that there are three categories of schools in the camp; Church-run, Sole proprietors and Community schools.

The learning environment stakeholders reckon is unrestricted. Thus, the presence of grown-ups and children in the same classroom is a recipe for inefficient learning atmosphere. Grown-up most often than not treat teachers as peers because they are able to take teachers for lunch, provide fashionable gifts and offer tokens.

### **3.3.2 The Role of Education Authorities of the Buduburam Refugee Settlement**

#### **a. UNHCR**

Stakeholders intimated that although the return of the UNHCR in 2003 after barely two years of withdrawal of essential services to the Buduburam Refugee Camp brought some semblance of relief in key areas including education; however, its intervention has got some constraints and limitations which need to be addressed systematically. Clearly, the problems of education at the camp are so huge that the UNHCR unilaterally is unable to cater for all aspects.

The UNHCR's interventions through the provision of textbooks, student desk, tables and chairs for teachers, notebooks and basic training for teachers have had some impact. However, stakeholders contend that the mechanism for smooth and effective monitoring and supervision of these educational resources provided to the schools has not been the best. According to the focus group discussants, though UNHCR has made significant efforts thus far with respect the upgrading the schools, much more still needs to be done in terms of quality and performance or what goes on in the schools/classrooms with regards to effectiveness and efficiency of school performance and compliance with approved educational standards.

They also conceded that the training provided for teachers was worthwhile though, but called on the UNHCR and the Central Education Board to diversify the trainings. They therefore, called for the UNHCR to be more pro-active and seek to involve other stakeholders given its own limitations in providing quality education for refugees.

#### **b. Buduburam Central Education Board (BCEB)**

The BCEB has limitations of personnel and competent staff, which are further compounded by structural as well as financial constraints, to effectively oversee what goes on in the several dozen schools. It depends solely on UNHCR for its support. It was also noted during the focus groups discussions that out of the 42 schools in the camp only 11 schools, for now, form part of the UNHCR Pilot initiative. These selected schools, according to the BCEB were chosen due to their ability to fulfill some basic requirements of regulations set by the Ghana Education Service (GES) and understandably have the capacity to improve their school performances.

Particularly worth mentioning during the course of consultations with the various stakeholders, was the lack of clear-cut mandate for the Central Education Board. According to the groups, the Board is also challenged by both internal and external difficulties in terms of coordination with the GES, school administrators, the Liberian Refugee Welfare Council, the Settlement Management, Parent-Teachers-Associations, School Management Committees, and the community at large.

The focus groups discussions noted severe administrative complexities faced by the Central Education Board in ensuring that GES stipulated standards are met within the schools and this undermines the modest gains aimed at improving the standards of education at the settlement. However, while emphasis tend to be tilted towards increased income for most of the settlement's schools, the question of making available prescribed textbooks, enabling learning environment and adequately responding to teachers' demands among others remains a primary concern, though farfetched, for the BCEB and its general membership. Some people were of the opinion that the Board functions to a very large extent at the dictates of the UNHCR, this is again debatable.

### **3.3.3 The Schools**

*In this section, the schools have been grouped into three categories, namely church or CBOs related schools, sole proprietor-run schools and the refugee-community run schools.*

*Definition:*

*Church/CBOs-run: schools that are owned by religious bodies or refugee community-based nonprofit organizations.*

*Sole proprietors-run: schools owned and run by individual refugees.*

*Community-run: schools constructed by UNCHR through the Christian Council of Ghana and run by the refugee community.*

Initiatives driven by church/CBOs have contributed immensely to the proliferation of schools in the refugee camp mainly to address the increasing demands of children not in school. Although their motive to assist the community in providing education is a worthwhile one, the discussants pointed out an irony. They believe that the churches are not doing enough to ensure that problems of adequate accommodation, sanitation, proper ventilation and the lack of qualified teachers get appropriate redress. Besides, very little was being done as regards the improvement of academic performances. There are cases of church buildings hosting five to six different classes without any partition.

Most schools in the settlement run without any operating budget while others schools serve solely as income-generating tools for their owners. Teachers bear the brunt of the problem when church members and close associates of school owners and/or administrators are unable to pay their wards' tuition. Many hold the view that the church is obligated to them and this concept makes many members reluctant to find and pay school fees for their wards. Often staff members are dismissed over salary disputes and summarily replaced by church member irrespective of qualification.

The same applies to individuals who were challenged by the plight of the refugee community and wanted to make some impact in the area of education within the settlement. The absence of qualified human resources, instructional materials and infrastructure problems do also impair effective learning of students enrolled in the sole proprietors-run schools in the settlement. Profit margins in most instances overwhelm their philanthropic ideals and give rise to the employment of unqualified teaching staff including untrained relatives as teachers and administrators. The situation is even worsened by the charging of unaffordable school fees amidst severe financial hardships on the part of students and parents.

On the whole, individual-driven educational initiatives had neither been able to help the process of quality education at Buduburam nor strengthen financially staggering parents' resolve to get the value of their money. Besides, lack of resilience on the part of the parents to insist that schools' authorities deliver effectively remains one of the ultimate challenges facing the educational system at Buduburam.

The focus group discussions also noted with grave concern the numerous difficulties confronting the Buduburam refugee community owned school(s). The difficulties stated ranged from overcrowding, inadequate in-service teachers training program, lack of resource centers and science laboratory, poor monitoring and supervision, lack of management transparency and gross financial indiscipline. Lack of proper communication, the absence of operational budgets, improper screening and placement of both staff and students coupled with very poor salary structures were among the constraints highlighted. Besides, the psyche of obsession for resettlement overwhelms parents to the extent that many force their wards out of school while teachers and headmasters often abandon their duties in search of resettlement opportunities.

These schools once depended solely on monies collected from students to run prior to the UNHCR's resumption of assistance and introduction of its pilot subsidies for selected schools. There are two refugee-community owned schools-Kiddies Kollege and the Buduburam Refugee Community School- the later of which is a recipient of the pilot subsidy. The two other community schools are government owned: District Assembly Primary and Junior secondary schools.

Stakeholders observed that an initial attempt by the UNHCR to reduce congestion particularly in the community-owned school(s) ran into difficulties due to rivalry on control over and ownership between 'UNHCR-community school authority' and traditional leaders of the host community. The ensuing deadlock according to stakeholders necessitated yet another construction of a new school block by the UNHCR on land provided by the Catholic Diocese of Cape Coast. In effect, the management of the new structures has been placed under that of the St Gregory Catholic School where the new school block has been put up, near the settlement. This decision has attracted the displeasure of some residents of the settlement including the Administration of the Buduburam Refugee Community School and members of its SMC/PTA. The decongestion process necessary for the refugee community schools is being hampered by devolution of authority and poor communication among the stakeholders.

### **3.3.4 The Buduburam School Environment:**

During the survey, the focus group discussion succeeded in establishing that, in the midst of the dynamics of a refugee situation inundated with trauma-stricken inhabitants, not a single school had a counseling section or counselors for that matter. The grim nature of the situation in the schools calls for the need for counseling for the purpose of de-traumatizing teachers, students, administrators, parents and the community at large. Trauma Counseling and peace-building measures would effectively help to reorientate students and teachers as well as administrators, the discussants intimated.

It was also mentioned that school counseling would essentially reshape teachers' focus, guide teachers in view of their limitations with students, and discourage students from offering tokens, gifts or sex to teachers and administrators alike. Appropriate counseling, the focus groups pointed out would aid teachers in appreciating their roles as proxy parents, with a view to demonstrating a sense of belonging in the supervision of their students. Offering teachers, gifts, sex and bribes was not just limited to students – but some parents were said to be encouraging this unfortunate practice. There are also no structures in place to disabuse students' minds of drugs and alcoholism among others.

Additionally, parents' inability to meet up with the tuition needs of their wards, unavailability of textbooks, lack of appreciation on the part of students as to the value of learning, non-existent trauma counseling sections and the increased financial and other demands on students are also matters of grave concern which definitely impair the quality of the schools' performance.

It was found out that extra curriculum activities were grossly missing in the schools. This has an adverse effect on students' enrollment since they see the schools to be too boring and abstract. Besides, there is no school feeding programs and no systematic recreational activities to motivate kids, especially the disadvantaged, to stay in school

The school environment reportedly is often polluted with garbage by some community residents. Also, many residents of the community lack absolute interest and confidence in the schools and at such do nothing to either protect school properties or show any semblance of respect and support for the schools within the settlement. Some parents or guardians go to the schools to beat up or fuss with teachers and school administrators for disciplining their wards. "A teacher merciless beat my child and left his back with scars. I carry my people to the school and gave it to him good... En he know, we are all traumatized en he beat somebody child like that"? This was an attempt by one parent to justify her action against a teacher for allegedly beating her child.

There is also the tendency of some parents seeing the Nursery Schools as baby-sitting centers rather than learning centers and sometimes do not go to pick up the children at the end of the day. Teachers have to chase mothers at home with their wards. Most of the schools do not have water available for the kids to drink neither urinal nor toilet facilities.

Enforcing discipline at the individual level in an environment like Buduburam Refugee Settlement is an uphill task. This accordingly is because almost every kid in the settlement seemed to be doing the wrong things, especially so, where the whole of "Liberia" is cornered in a cubicle and some parents do not discourage the bad behaviors of their wards.

### **3.3.5 Monitoring and Supervision**

Stakeholders critically debated the crucial role monitoring and supervision play in enhancing effective school performance. However, the various stakeholders argued that proper monitoring and supervision would only be adhered to when schools' administrators are adequately empowered with training in monitoring and supervision skills and when the CEB has the authority with Ghana Education Service's (GES) backing to enforce appropriate education policies and regulations necessary to put the settlement schools on par with others in Ghana. Towards this end, stakeholders called for the enforcement of appropriate and workable interventions that would aid the achievement and enhancement of quality education at Buduburam Camp. This, they believe should entail consistent collaborative efforts and support from the GES, Camp Management and the Central Education Board to enable the delivery of quality results.

Effective supervision and monitoring, at most, tend to be hampered by either low or no incentives for schoolteachers and appropriate training for administrators. Hampered by the lack of information sharing among strategic stakeholders in the education sector, the CEB has been incapacitated greatly. Most often the CEB is unable to enforce regulations and standards because partners in the setup who have the potential to assist do not complement its efforts across the board. The stakeholders also said it is imperative that the CEB along with other educational stakeholders pursues institutional coordination that would enhance its activities and programme.

They also emphasized the need for collaboration backed by training of teachers, increase in the awareness and role of the PTAs/SMCs, capacity building for CEB staff in supervision, monitoring and school management techniques. Moreover, with the infusion of extra-curricular activities backed by the adoption of teacher-student-friendly methodologies, the level of delivery and performance in the schools will no doubt be improved. They stressed the need for hands-on teaching-and-learning materials to reflect existing realities, short-term capacity-building courses and adequate motivation for all teachers.

The Settlement Management, Liberia Refugee Welfare Council, Parents-Teachers-Associations, Youth groups, and Women Associations among others have all admitted shortcomings in maintaining checks and balances at some point or the other in the schools. More over, there is expressed willingness on their part to see the quality of education improved.

From the lenses of the various stakeholders, the launch of school feeding programs could induce pupils in a way and at the same time endeavor to forestall a number of the social factors that tend to affect and serve as hindrances to the regular enrollment of many pupils. Besides, the children too are not motivated to go to school because in their opinion even those who go represent a paradox of what should obtain in a school. Stakeholders conceded that while it is true that improving the quality of education is strategic and compelling, however, the need for adopting structural changes and consistent networking among the schools, UNHCR/CEB and GES should be adequately addressed. They all recognized that there are serious lapses and that these lapses are counter-productive to the overall learning process of the refugees.

The teachers too have their constraints that retard their performances in the classroom. Many students are over-aged and misplaced while others have serious psychosocial problems. Some very distractive and are 'parents-students' (i.e. students are parenting children and managing their own families and therefore refuse to be disciplined by their teachers and school administrators) who insist on having their own and thus make classroom management extremely difficult for the poorly trained and under-paid teacher. Regular lesson planning and marking of student papers is a big problem while the classrooms are so congested that teachers are virtually unable to move around the classrooms in order to check students' activities during lessons. Hardly do school administrators or CEB check teachers' lessons let alone monitor what is being thought in the class, as a result there are some schools not teaching the approved syllabus.

The lack of administration of Schools' Entrance and Placement Exams as well as the unregulated transfer of students from one school to the other featured prominently. Parents transfer wards from one school to the other when they fail or are not able to pay school fees without any hindrance. Administrators of schools do not seem to be keen in maintaining strict adherence with reference to the quality of exams administered to new entrants. Increasing the schools' numerical strengths take precedence over the setting of high academic and moral standards since these schools attract dividends through the use of high student enrollments.

## Chapter Four - Out-of-School-Children at Buduburam

### *4.0 Factors Responsible for Out-of- School-Children*

The question of survival constitutes the most overriding preoccupation of constituents at the Buduburam Refugee Camp. In the midst of this crucial concern, it is significant to highlight a series of probable causes of having out-of-school-children on the camp.

A dozen abandoned children joined shipping vessels like all others fleeing the conflict in Liberia in search of safe haven. Most of these unaccompanied or abandoned children tentatively found favor with some 'Good Samaritans' who were challenged by their plight to assist, at least for the time being. The family size of others coupled with extreme difficulties have affected the ability of some parents to cope, thus, paving the way for turning some of the children into eventual bread winners of the family or depend solely on themselves.

The discussants raised constraints faced by some families who rely to a large extent on support from abroad. Such cases involve foster parents who are looking after children of relatives who are outside Ghana. These foster children and wards most often maligned their caretakers which result to pre-mature decisions on the part of relations abroad. The hasty and wrong judgments of some of the parents and/or relatives abroad in most instances lead to channeling of remittances to wards directly rather than the foster parents or guardians on the camp and this often causes serious rifts and gross disrespect on the part of wards to these guardians. Since they have money some take their destiny into their own hands and will either use for school or not. There are cases where money send to relatives are used for different purposes rather than spending it on the children's education. Again most relatives abroad are not familiar with the three-term school system run in Ghana as against the two-semester system in Liberia and so in the event where relatives request money for the third term, they get baffled and refuse to send the money, thus interrupting the wards' education.

Pre-school for many parents also tend to be very expensive and luxurious, so they do not send their kids or wards regularly. Besides, there is a tendency for traumatized and un-informed people to have misplaced priorities and many of these parents are no exception. Many prefer spending huge sums on merry-making and graduation ceremonies and not academic excellence. The focus groups also saw single parenthood as one of the challenging hurdles many families are forced to confront on a daily basis. Worse still, these problems are further compounded by the scarcity of financial aids or student sponsorship programs to ease the stressful and strenuous experiences of most single parents (mostly women on the camp) relative to sending their children or wards to school, particularly for those kids at primary and junior secondary school levels. As single parents, mothers are faced with large family sizes to cater for; the provision of sufficient parental guidance, keeping of kids in school, and avoiding of the young ones from negative influences or social vices is extremely difficult if not impossible within such a refugee setting as Buduburam. This thus immensely contributes to the high rate of student drop-outs and the students' subsequent 'don't care attitude' exhibited towards education at the camp.

The unnecessary numerous demands brought to bear on students by the schools, especially teachers, who also like to make some money, make pamphlets and handouts as a result of non-existent or appropriate textbooks, sometimes forced children out of schools since parents and self-sponsored students can not afford the very high cost of schooling. The unreasonable and persistent demands of some teachers, most of whom are not kept in check by their principals or headmasters and at the same time failed to appreciate the grim and staggering realities of the camp, continued to ostracize pupils who are unable to meet these demands. Moreover, the traumatic complexities of the parents and students put them in an imbalance state to clearly understand the relevance education. Financial constraints backed by social uncertainties culminating into single parenting and the breadwinner syndrome equally shares in the plight of 'out-of-school-children'.

Accordingly, another contributing factor responsible for kids being 'out-of-school-children' at the camp is the obsession with resettlement to the Western World. Most parents in effect do encourage and sometimes coerce their children or wards to abandon school purportedly in preparation of the various processes that obtain for asylum-seekers. Parents often take their children out of school and fail to get

them to return in continuation of their studies. The children are often programmed by parents to believe that they would be enrolled into schools on entry into America or Europe and therefore there is no need for attending school whilst waiting to be resettled. The end product for many of these children who stay out of school for between three to five years or more is however disastrous especially if finally denied resettlement.

## **Chapter Five-Conclusion:**

Given the overall state of education at the camp, there is a consensus that the quality of education is indeed less impressive in terms of content, delivery, monitoring and supervision as well as student performance. It was observed that most of the schools are faced with similar problems ranging from unqualified teachers, improper placement of instructional staff, low or no salaries, lack of libraries, laboratories and appropriate textbooks. Most of the schools depend solely on fees collected from students in order to run the schools. There are imbalances in the mode of instruction from school to school and this is partly a result of schools not adhering to GES approved and/or appropriate curriculums and syllabuses.

Initiatives driven by faith-based groups, community-based organizations, and private individuals have contributed immensely to the proliferation of schools in the Buduburam Refugee Settlement. However, addressing the increasing demands of quality education for the refugees have had some impact, but their approaches require urgent and total overhauling in order to remedy the situation.

Some difficulties confronting the Buduburam refugee schools highlighted by the discussants include: lack of comprehensive in-service teachers training program, lack of resource centers; poor monitoring and supervision as well as gross managerial incompetence. The psyche of obsession for resettlement overwhelms parents to the extent that most of them place their children's education off their priority list while some teachers and headmasters abandon their duties in search of better empowerment opportunities including resettlement. The grim nature of the situation in the schools calls for efficient counseling and empowerment programs for teachers, students, administrators, parents and the community at large.

The question of survival constitutes the most overriding preoccupation of constituents at the Buduburam Refugee Settlement. There are very large family sizes of most homes at the camp cum settlement. Many of the households are headed by single parents who lack employable skills and employment opportunities. This adversely affects the ability of parents to cope with the rising cost of living, thus, paving the way for turning children into bread winners for the family and the adoption of very risky behaviors.

## Recommendations:

In an attempt to provide a way forward following the various discussions and findings, several recommendations were made to assist in improving the quality of education and general school performance as well as reduce the number of out-of-school-children within the Buduburam Refugee Settlement.

It was recommended that parents be orientated so as to appreciate the need for their wards' education; that counseling and peace-building programmes form part of the school curriculum at the settlement; that refresher courses for teachers and school administrators be organized either terminally or bi-terminally taking into consideration content and methodology; that comprehensive training packages for untrained teachers be developed based on levels, and that school feeding programmes be initiated for lower primary and upper primary school children.

The need for sponsorship programs to decrease the number of disadvantaged children not in school to enable them obtain basic primary education was also recommended along with the regular and proper supervision and monitoring of schools as regards the use of GES approved and/or appropriate syllabuses, curriculums, textbooks among others in the schools.

Besides, intellectual discourses, award schemes, sports and quizzing contests to engender extra-curricular activities were recommended for making the schools lively. CEB in collaboration with school administrators should coordinate efforts and insist on uniformity in testing and placement examinations at all levels while efforts must be made to continually reduce congestion and over-aged problems in the schools.

School management training and other capacity-building opportunities for the Buduburam Central Education Board, school administrators, teachers, and the PTAs/SMCs including the introduction of a 'feeder-school' program were recommended in order to bring about and ensure standard and quality as well as retain children in the schools.

It was also recommended that libraries and laboratories as well as recreational facilities be provided to inform the all-round development of both students and teachers and to further enrich the learning environment of refugee children and children of the host community and lastly that the Pre-Grade be made a component part of the primary education package for all the schools within the settlement.

## Appendix- 1

### Student Enrolment by School/ Sex for Second Term – 2004/2005

#### Pre-Primary School

No	School	Male	Female	Total
1.	Kid & US	94	123	217
2.	Faith Gospel	14	32	46
3.	Catholic Children Center	55	65	120
4.	Dale Federwitz	27	36	63
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>446</b>

#### Pre-Primary and Primary Schools

1.	<b>Children Better Way (CBW)</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>609</b>
2.	Faith Foundation	108	102	210
3.	Carolyn A. Miller	126	125	251
4.	Christian Academy Int'l	48	52	100
5.	Children Rescue Ministry	51	61	112
6.	TRUSS International	54	56	110
7.	Macole Home Academy	55	53	108
8.	Joy Foundation	76	72	148
9.	Buduburam D/A Primary	246	280	526
10.	Refuge Baptist	79	102	181
11.	Christ Foundation Academy	53	61	114
12.	STU Schell Family	53	40	93
13.	True Life Foundation	90	95	185
14.	Loving Kids	43	52	95
15.	Kiddies Kollege	158	257	415
16.	Providence Preparatory	42	51	93
17.	All Souls	80	95	175
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>1657</b>	<b>1868</b>	<b>3525</b>

#### Pre-Primary, Primary and JSS Schools

1.	A-47 Christian Academy	215	302	517
2.	Seventh Day Adventist (SDA)	88	64	152
3.	J. T. Addo Memorial	94	101	195
4.	Blessed Wisdom Institute	110	156	266
5.	Tika Golden Age	185	164	349
6.	Grace International	39	68	107
7.	Emmanuel Lutheran	174	178	352
8.	St. Gregory	433	581	1014
9.	Assembly of God	162	194	356
10.	Fundamental Baptist	239	190	429
11.	Peter Burrus Memorial	106	130	236
12.	* Buduburam D/A JSS	142	136	278

\* The School marked with asterisk only operates on JSS level.

### Primary and JSS Schools

No.	School	Male	Female	Total
1.	Christian Preparatory	137	156	293
2.	Buduburam United Methodist	149	97	246
3.	Victory Christian Academy	116	138	254
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>793</b>

### Pre-Primary, Primary, JSS & SSS

1.	New Testament	212	364	576
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### Primary, JSS & SSS

1.	<b>Dominion Christian Academy</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>507</b>
2.	Buduburam Refugee Community School	475	460	935
3.	Precious Jewels	161	112	273
4.	Buduburam Community High School	64	238	302
5.	Precious Jewels Evening	48	53	101
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>1118</b>	<b>2118</b>

## Student Population Statistics by Grade and Sex

Second Term – 2004/2005

Grade/Class	Male	Female	Total
Pre-Grade	1,266	1,492	2,758
1 (One)	495	585	1,080
2 (Two)	453	528	981
3 (Three)	453	481	934
4 (Four)	403	513	916
5 (Five)	392	494	886
6 (Six)	381	433	814
7 (Seven)	350	388	738
8 (Eight)	360	374	734
9 (Nine)	320	348	668
10 (Ten)	153	218	371
11 (Eleven)	196	197	393
12 (Twelve)	226	208	434
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,448</b>	<b>6,259</b>	<b>11,707</b>

## Summary

School Level	Enrolment	% of Total	Enrolment
1. Pre-Primary	2,758	24%	
2. Primary	5,611	48%	
3. Junior Secondary	2,140	18%	
4. Senior Secondary	1,198	10%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,707</b>	<b>100%</b>	

**Source: Buduburam Central Education Board 2004/2005**





## Appendix 4

### *BASELINE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE (Stakeholders)*

**Buduburam Refugee Camp, Gomoa District  
February 2005**

1. What is your observation/assessment of schools in the Buduburam Refugee Camp in terms of delivery and quality? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Inputs: resources from UNHCR, Parents, Teacher's expertise and motivation to deliver, private stakeholders.

2. What is your observation/assessment of the management of schools in the camp in terms of:  
Monitoring \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Supervision \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Control Mechanism \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Why are so many children out – of - school in the camp? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. How do you think we can retain children, especially girls, in the school system of Buduburam Refugee Camp? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Any other issue(s) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_