



STATEMENT ON CSO-MEDIA MONITORING OF DESKS SITUATION IN PUBLIC BASIC SCHOOLS IN GUSHEGU AND KINTAMPO NORTH

Eduwatch works to promote an equitable, inclusive, and responsive education system that assures of quality and equal opportunities for all.

On 26th February 2024, in collaboration with the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund) and the media, Eduwatch embarked on a CSO-Media visit to the Gushegu municipality to monitor the availability of desks in some public basic schools, following the distribution of 13,465 dual desks to basic schools by GETFund in 2022/23, and assess the impact on teaching and learning. On 27th February, Eduwatch and TV3 proceeded to the Kintampo North municipality to assess the desks situation to inform our advocacy.

KEY FINDINGS

GUSHEGU

1. Gushegu municipal has a public basic school desk deficit of 17,849. The municipality received 180 dual desks from the GETFund 2022/23 supply. The highest number of desks supplied to a school was 10, with six (6) schools benefitting. The least was two (2) - supplied to Katani M/A Primary.
2. Gushegu M/A Primary Block A received 10 dual desks, and were being used by the Primary four (4) class. The class had just 15 desks for a population of 57 pupils.
3. Gushegu M/A Junior High School (JHS) received five (5) dual desks, and were all being used by the JHS 1 class. The class had nine (9) dual and nine (9) mono desks for a population of 68 pupils.
4. At the Maazijung JHS in the Kpatinnga Community, only 40 dual desks were available to a population of 315 pupils - a situation which has forced the school to run two (2) streams, with up to three pupils in JHS 2 sharing a desk. The school, however, did not receive any of the desks from the 2022/23 GETFund supply.
5. At the Gushegu Demonstration Primary, Basic 2 and 3 had a population of 145 and 163 pupils using 40 desks and 30 desks respectively. Aside the obvious overcrowding, some pupils had to use the floor and the teacher's table for writing. The school did not receive any of the desks from the 2022/23 GETFund supply.

KINTAMPO NORTH

6. Kintampo North has a public basic school desk deficit of 16,795.
7. In the Jato Akura Basic School, only 32 dual desks were available to 351 students.
8. Jato Akura Basic School had not received desks since 2018, when the longest-serving staff was posted there.
9. In the Gruma-line Islamic Basic School, only 25 dual and 20 mono desks were available for a student population of 368. The school had not received desks since 2015, when the current headteacher was posted there.

Africa Education Watch.

25 Nii Torgbor Avenue, ARS, East Legon.

Tel. 0303975001 | Email: info@africaeducationwatch.org | Twitter & Facebook: @AfricaEduWatch

www.africaeducationwatch.org



10. Both Jato Akura and Gruma-line Islamic Basic Schools have had to compel parents to buy desks for their wards transitioning from Primary 6 to JHS due to the non-availability of desks in the JHS. This negatively affected enrolment, transition and completion. In 2022 for instance, 14 out of the 44 pupils who completed Primary 6 in Gruma-line Islamic Basic School could not transition to JHS 1, partly due to their parents inability to buy them desks.

The Municipal Education Directors for Gushegu and Kintampo North indicated that, though the desks supplied/donated were welcome additions, they mostly represented a drop in a bucket considering the student population and huge desks deficits their municipalities faced.

THE NATIONAL PICTURE

The desk situation in Gushegu and Kintampo North represent the situation in many basic schools across the country, especially in rural areas, a situation caused by low investment in basic education infrastructure over the years.

In 2023, GHC 15 million was allocated for basic school furniture under GETFund, an amount worth about 30,000 desks. Considering that a desk deficit of one milli existed by 2021, this certainly is a drop in the ocean. To make matters worse, three (3) months into a new financial year, only GHC 6.7 million out of the paltry GHC 15 million has been released by the Ministry of Finance since appropriation in June 2023.

OUR CALL

We urge the Ministry of Education to increase allocations for desks to basic schools to at least GHC 60 million in the 2024 GETFund formula.

We call on the Minister of Finance to release outstanding funds for procuring desks under the 2023 GETFund formula.

We call on Parliament to show interest in the delayed disbursement of basic education funds under GETFund and demand accountability from the Minister of Finance on the slow disbursement.

We urge local governments and the non-state sector, including faith-based organizations and private companies to support the provision of desks in public basic schools.

Eduwatch will in the coming days engage the Ministers of Education and Finance, and the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education on the aforementioned issues.

The CSO-Media monitoring is part of activities under Eduwatch's SERVE III project being implemented with support from the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and in partnership with STAR-Ghana Foundation.

– End –

Accra, 4th March, 2024.