



The Leap to Literacy and Life Change in Northern Ghana

An Impact Assessment of School for Life (SfL)

Final Report

(Abridged Version)

**By Dr Leslie Casely-Hayford and Adom Baisie Ghartey (External Consultants) and
The SfL Internal Impact Assessment Team
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This study is dedicated to Philip Natuk Bilikuni, the Saboba District Supervisor who died in a motor accident in the process of the Impact Assessment (IA). Philip was a very committed educationist and served with SfL for several years.

The contents of this report are based on a joint effort between the external consultants and the SfL staff who conducted the IA over a one year period in order to review SfL's impact over the last 12 years. The report has required extensive time and effort by the School for Life staff in all aspects of data collection and analysis. It has benefited greatly from the guidance and support of the Internal School for Life Impact Assessment Team who include:

Mr Sulemana Osman Saaka, Programme Director;
 Mr Hussein Abdul.Ziblim, Deputy Director, Operations;
 Ms Helene Horsbrugh, Programme Development Advisor; and
 Mr A. A. Huseini, Principal Educationist.

The Field Teams for the IA Tracer Study included the following people:

Name	Designation	Location or institution	Field Team
Hussein A. Ziblim	Deputy Director, Operations	Head office	Team 1
Dramani Isaac Imoro	District Coordinator	East Gonja	Team 1
Natuk Bilikuni Philip	District Supervisor	Saboba/Chereponi	Team 1
Hussein Muhib	District Supervisor	Gushegu/Karaga	Team 1
Esther Samuel	Gender Specialist	National Vocational Training Institute	Team 1
Bawah A Yussif	Area Coordinator	Tamale Area Office	Team 2
Khalid Abdul Manan	District Coordinator	Zabzugu/Tatale	Team 2
Grace Abudu	Educationist	Head Office	Team 2
Abdulai Musah Gonje	District Supervisor	Tolon/Kumbungu	Team 2
Khadija Osman	Former SfL Facilitator, now teacher under UTDBE	Gushegu Karaga	Team 2
Adom Baisie Ghartey	External Consultant	Ghartey Associates	Team 3
Iddrisu Iddi	Area Coordinator	Yendi Area Office	Team 3
Abdulai T Sulemana	District Supervisor	Tolon/Kumbungu	Team 3
Panya Comfort	District Supervisor	Nanumba	Team 3
Joshua Wumbee	Senior Researcher	Associates for Change (AFC)	Team 3

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- Mr K. K. Hayford, Associate Researcher, Ghartey Associates
- Mr Roland Akabzaa, Research Officer, Associates for Change
- Mr Quansah, Associate Researcher, Associates for Change
- Ms Bib Hughes, Associate Researcher, Associates for Change

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1.0 Introduction

The Ghana Living Standards Survey (2000) reveals that poverty rates are increasing in deprived areas of the country particularly where there is extreme poverty. The Northern, Upper East, Upper West, Central and Western Regions have the highest incidence of poverty where more than 50% of people live below the poverty line (i.e. live on less than 1 US Dollar per day) and as many as 30% live below the extreme poverty line (i.e. people living on less than ¼ of a Dollar per day). Nineteen of the 40 most deprived Districts in Ghana fall within the 3 northern regions. One indicator of this deprivation is the fact that educational development in Northern Ghana lags behind the rest of the country. The poor level of educational development in Northern Ghana has its roots in Ghana's colonial past¹. In spite of certain remedial development measures being implemented since independence, the phenomenon of north-south labour drift is still exhibited particularly by young girls².

In response to the peculiar educational problems in Northern Ghana, the School for Life (SfL) Programme was developed. School for Life is a functional literacy programme for out-of-school children in the Northern Region and was designed as a complementary educational programme for children between the ages of 8-14. The programme offers a nine month literacy cycle in the mother tongue,³ aimed at assisting children attain basic literacy skills and then integrate into the formal education system. The SfL programme started in 1995 as a pilot project in two districts of the Northern Region with 50 classes in each district. The two partners to the programme, the Ghana Developing Communities Association (GDCA) and the Ghana Friendship Groups in Denmark (GV), succeeded in developing an effective model to provide functional literacy to out-of-school children in rural areas. Following this success, the scale of delivery was increased during the second and third phases of the programme. In Phase 2, (1998 to 2003), SfL was operated in 8 districts and benefited 40,000 children. In Phase 3, (2003 to 2008) the programme area expanded to cover 10 districts and 48,000 children, with mainstreaming, advocacy and replication becoming part of the programme strategy.

SfL's mainstreaming efforts aim at contributing to the improvement of quality education in the formal school. The main activities in this area include the integration of SfL Facilitators into the formal system along with teacher training and support at the lower primary school level to improve instructional practices of teachers. In the third phase, replication was defined as the implementation of SfL by other donors and organisations. The 2006 mid-term review of SfL Phase 3 identified future prospects for the programme and acknowledged its extensive experience, setting out a timeframe and direction for planning Phase 4. Key milestones in the plan included implementation of an extensive impact assessment; conclusion of a change management process on the cooperation and

¹ The colonial administration sought to limit education in the north.

² Such girls serve as head porters ('kayaye'), restaurant attendants and house helps. The situation is compounded by certain socio-cultural practices which retard education of children. In this respect, girls are particularly more affected than boys.

³ SfL currently works in 8 local languages (L1). The selected language must have its own written form.

partnership among the GV SfL Committee, GDCA SfL Executive Committee (EC) and the SfL management; establishment of an Advocacy Think Tank to develop strategies for Phase 4; and the formulation of a vision for Phase 4 by both SfL (EC and Management) and the SfL Committee.

Although there have been several monitoring and evaluation exercises over the past twelve years, including a number of reviews, studies and assessments, no systematic assessment of the significant and lasting changes brought about by the programme have been made to date. “The SfL Impact Assessment was designed to serve this purpose” (*School for Life TOR document, 2006*).

The main objective of the Impact Assessment (IA) was to analyse and document the impact of the SfL approach on the delivery of quality education to children in underserved areas of the Northern Region. The IA was designed to focus on the replication and mainstreaming possibilities of SfL. In more specific terms, the impact assessment sought to:

- i. identify the significant and lasting changes created by SfL in individual lives and local communities;
- ii. offer explanations as to how SfL interventions have affected these changes (cause-effect) using the mandatory components and values of SfL as points of departure;
- iii. explore the potential for replication by development agencies and integration of the SfL approach into the formal system as a means to offer quality education to the underserved populations of Northern Ghana; and
- iv. identify any other effects/changes necessary for meeting the overall objectives.

The IA was designed to be a “high level strategic exercise” focusing on replication and mainstreaming possibilities of SfL. The main focus of the study was aimed at providing an assessment of the impact of the SfL programme on the participants, families, communities, Facilitators and schools which have received SfL support. The IA also involved a focussed assessment of the main factors which were essential to achieving programme impact, success in achieving literacy attainment and sustained change at the individual, family and community levels. These factors are considered in relation to aspects of the SfL programme that are potentially viable for replication and mainstreaming within the civil society and public education sector.

This abridged version of the IA report documents the key outcomes of the IA, and summarises the main findings, recommendations and conclusions. It also includes a selected number of Annexes extracted from the main report.

1.1 Overview of Findings

The “Leap to Literacy” is the story of the School for Life programme and the impact the programme made over the last 12 years on the lives of over 85,000 children in the Northern Region of Ghana. The research is based on a one year participatory study of the SfL programme from a beneficiary and family perspective. Over 77 in-depth interviews were held with ex Sflers and their families along with over 50 non SfLers and their families in communities which had participated in the programme three, six and nine years ago. The impact study traced over 77 children in nine schools across three districts in Northern Region who were enrolled in the primary to Senior Secondary School (SSS) level in order to understand their experiences from participating in the SfL programme. The information gathered focused on what they learned, and how these experiences had changed their life, and that of their family and community. The study explores the keys to programme success and the impact the programme made on the ex SfLs and ex SfL Facilitators across the Northern Region of Ghana.

Overall, the findings of the IA were very positive, indicating that SfL has made an impact on improving access and retention of children across the 12 districts in the Northern Region that benefited from SfL’s interventions. SfL has had a huge impact on the levels of educational attainment and achievement among ex SfLers within the formal school system. According to the IA, SfL has had remarkable success in addressing gender inequality by helping parents rethink the value of girls’ education. This has resulted in improved retention rates in the formal school system and a lower dropout rate in the Northern Region.

The main findings from the study reveal that:

- The ex-SfLers were children who were not likely to be selected or supported by their parents to enter the formal education system. Ex SfLers were not initially sent to school since they were needed on the farm or in the household to assist with chores and take care of younger siblings.
- Over 90% of children between ages 8-14, who enrolled in SfL class, graduated from the SfL class; 65% of those enrolled in the SfL programme were integrated into the formal system.
- The integration of SfLers into the formal system was having a significant impact on the Gross Enrolment Rates (GER) in the Northern Region. The Ministry of Education found that the SfL program had contributed to a 2-3% increase in GER in the northern region (MOESS, 2006)⁴.
- The SfL programme was also having a positive impact on parent’s attitudes towards girls’ education. At least 43% of those enrolled in the programme were females of which a large proportion were completing and entering the formal system and remaining in the system until the higher levels of education (i.e. SSS).

⁴ MOESS (2006). A Study into Complementary Education System in the Three Northern Regions, Ministry of Education, Science and Sports- Basic Education Division.

- SfL was also demonstrating strong retention and completion rates in comparison to non-SfLers.

In terms of the SfL outcomes regarding the learners, their families and communities:

- SfL provided a solid foundation for Sflers to move from mother tongue literacy to second language acquisition in English. The SfL programme was also demonstrating learning outcomes for children who had transitioned into the formal education system by helping them accelerate and enhance their academic performance once integrated into formal school.
- Sflers were able to learn independently particularly once integrated in remote area primary schools where teachers were often not regular. Ex Sflers were found assisting their peers pursue reading and writing activities in classes where there were no teachers and assisted their peers learn to read using the phonetic approach to literacy.
- The values embedded in the SfL curriculum contributed to them being disciplined, confident and self motivated. This coupled with high academic performance earned ex Sflers leadership roles in their classes and schools. Sflers were often seen by their peers as role models.

The participatory teaching approaches in SfL classes had direct impact on helping children feel confident, self-assertive and enjoy learning. SfL children learned to analyse, ask questions and be critical thinkers through the participatory methods used by the Facilitator. Participatory teaching approaches were based on the training, curriculum, as well as the teaching and learning materials. The impact on SfL learners was most vividly characterised when the SfL learner had transitioned into the formal system. Their peers and teachers talked about how they could see that “something” was different about the ex SfL learners. They were more confident about learning, more determined to make it through the system and more concerned about the people and world around them. Most of them were seen as role models in the public education system exhibiting a high degree of discipline, respect, and purposefulness. High results were attained in language subjects and learners were often elected to represent their class and school as school prefects.

The IA revealed that SfL was making significant impact at the family and community levels. At the family level those who had completed SfL were able to assist their family with basic reading and writing tasks in the home. They were also able to transfer the knowledge of reading and writing in assisting their siblings and in some cases their parents. Most importantly, the ex Sflers were sharing the developmental messages of social change within the families and communities. Lessons on malaria prevention, environmental health and sanitation, family planning and sustainable agriculture were all being talked about and shared with families of ex Sflers. Many of the families were practicing better hygiene, reducing their family size, critically thinking about gender equality and ethnic diversity, and improving their agricultural practices through reduced bush burning. Many of these changes in behaviour and attitudes were sustained long after the SfL programme had stopped in the community.

The SfL programme was saving the Government a significant amount of funding and was extremely cost effective in helping children break through to literacy in deprived rural contexts where teachers were often not found nor were willing to live. For instance, the unit cost per SfL learner is USD \$16.57 compared to USD \$ 70.80 per child in the public primary system in Northern Ghana⁵. The SfL programme has saved the Government of Ghana over USD \$6,023,168. by educating over 85,073 children. Considering that these children would normally have spent three years in the primary school system if it were not for the SfL programme--- the Government of Ghana (GoG) has saved a total USD 18,069,504 over this three year period.

Keys to programme success are based on:

- Flexible school systems that allow children who are not likely to attend formal school become literate, and often influencing their parents to send them to the formal school.
- Mother tongue literacy approaches using phonic and syllabic methods that were key in helping children break through to literacy within an accelerated timeframe (nine months, compared to three years within the formal system).
- Encouragement, patience and commitment exhibited by SfL facilitators helped children break through to literacy. These values were more important to the SfL learners than the training and education levels of the facilitators.
- Methodological awareness of children as to the reasons they had succeeded in learning to read and write was significant. Children and teachers attributed their break through to literacy to the usage of the mother tongue, as well as the syllabic and phonic approaches used by SfL. Most ex SfLers spoke of how they had used these same methods to learn to read the English Language.

The cultural relevancy of the curriculum had a profound impact on helping learners build their confidence in learning to read at an older age. The cultural relevancy of the programme was a key factor in helping build children's self-confidence, and self-esteem reinforcing their own cultural identity as rural children. SfL children were learning the value of being a Ghanaian and the value of rural life and farming. They become aware of the dangers of malaria, large family sizes, and unsafe water. Through the curriculum and instructional practice children learnt that people should be treated equally whether a boy or a girl and this was being translated into the family and communal way of life through role change among boys and girls. They began to appreciate new ways of thinking about the world and people around them translating this into more appreciation of gender differences, equality and ethnic diversity and a consciousness of the different roles played by girls and boys in a social context which awarded conformity and restricted change.

2.0 The Methodological Approach

The impact assessment of SfL took place over a one year period where external consultants worked closely with the SfL internal team to conduct an in-depth analysis of the major changes and impact of the SfL programme over the last 12 years of

⁵ The Unit cost per child in SfL does not include the management and supervision costs.

implementation. The three phases of the SfL programme were reviewed using a longitudinal and comparative approach tracing ex SfLers, their non SfL counterparts and families across three points in time:

- ex SfLers, and their families who had completed SfL classes 2-3 years ago (Phase 3 graduates could mainly be found at the upper primary level of formal education);
- ex SfLers who had completed SfL classes 4-5 years ago (Phase 2 SfL graduates, most of whom were found at the Junior Secondary Level (JSS) level of education); and
- ex SfLers and their families who had completed SfL classes over 8-9 years ago and could be found at the SSS level of education.

Two major phases of research were used in conducting the impact assessment. The first phase involved the impact assessment team in primary and secondary data collection of a quantitative nature which provided key educational trends over a 12 year period and related to impact. The second phase involved an in-depth tracer study which used mainly qualitative approaches such as in-depth interviews and focal group discussions with key beneficiaries (ex SfLers—integrated into the formal system and ex SfLers not integrated, their families and communities) over the twelve year period. The IA also involved interviews with other key stakeholders involved directly and indirectly in the SfL programme including chiefs and elders at the community level, head teachers, teachers and district assembly representatives.

The tracer study component of the impact assessment involved five weeks of intensive field work. In-depth interviews were conducted with the ex SfLers who had not integrated into the formal system along with their families at the community level. Nine communities across 3 SfL focal districts (Gusheigu, Yendi and Nanumba Districts) were selected along with one pilot district (Savelugu District) to test the instrumentation. All the districts selected were actively involved in SfL programming for the last 8-12 years and were, in two cases, the “pioneer” districts in the programme. Districts selected reflected an ethnic and linguistic mixture where possible (e.g. Nanumba and Gusheigu/Karaga). Communities were selected based on the following criteria:

- Having a large proportion of ex SfLers and their families from the tracer study schools available for interview at the community level;
- Ethnic and linguistic mixture; and
- The SfL programme had been closed and no longer active for at least the past 2-3 years.

The IA team also conducted 22 in-depth interviews with ex SfL facilitators across the three IA districts and interviewed district education officers involved with the programme. Focal group discussions and in-depth interviews were conducted with key community representatives and a cross section of SfL families who had integrated and not integrated their children into the formal education system.

Two other research exercises were conducted as part of the overall impact assessment. These were the community mini study on access to education and the replication

workshop. The mini study helped the IA team determine the degree to which communities are able to sustain sending all their children to school after having completed the SfL cycles and in the face of endemic poverty and some socio-cultural practices which do not favour the girls' education⁶. The second major exercise was a "Replication Workshop" held with key stakeholders including senior representatives from the Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service, Regional and District Directors of Education across three districts: Bole, Sawla and Gusheigu. The Replication Workshop helped to review the lessons learned in replication over the last four years based on concrete examples and experiences of three replicators in Ghana (e.g. PAPADEV, EQUALL and Roots and Futures). The workshop also helped the IA team to understand the Ministry of Education's vision for future replication and potential mainstreaming complementary education provision.

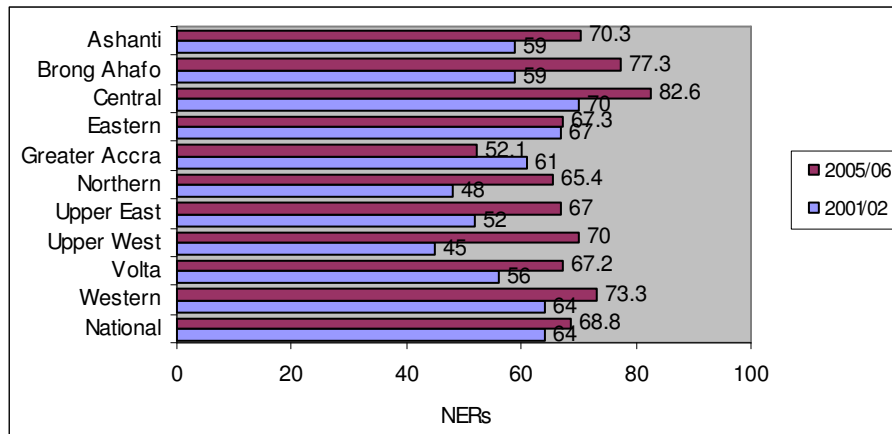
3.0 Context of Education in Northern Ghana

Over the last 12 years, research in Ghana suggests that there has been only modest improvement in the gross enrolment and net enrolment rates with some significant changes in Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER) and Net Enrolment Ratios (NER) over the last two years (Thompson with Casely-Hayford, 2007). Trends over the last two years suggest a dramatic improvement in GER and NER particularly in the Northern Region of Ghana. This has been linked to the introduction of the capitation grant and collective interventions of some service providers including SfL who are reaching scale⁷. Although provisional, the latest data from the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports (MOESS) suggests that despite the improvements in the GER and NER, there remains a large out of school population particularly in the Northern and Upper East Regions of Ghana where poverty and negative socio-cultural practices continue to prevent girls from accessing the formal education system. Figure 1 below illustrates some of the overall trends in NER across the regions of Ghana over the last five years. Disaggregated data for NER across the four IA focal districts reveals a much more negative trend.

⁶ SfL is usually in a community for three 9 month cycles.

⁷ See Thompson and Casely-Hayford (2007). *The Financing and Outcomes of Education in Ghana*. (Research on Outcomes to Education: forthcoming publication)

Figure 1: Net enrolment ratio in primary schools by region – 2001 vs. 2005



Net enrolment ratios follow similar trends, with the Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions experiencing the greatest increases over the five year period. Evaluative studies of the donor programmes in the region suggest that there are several major interventions helping to increase the enrolment rates at primary and JSS levels: food incentive and feeding programmes particularly aimed at attracting and retaining girls in the northern regions (e.g. CRS and WFP) are examples of this. The other major interventions demonstrating long term impact on improving access at the district and regional levels include complementary education programmes like the SfL model (Casely-Hayford, 2007)

Out of School Population across the Regions in Ghana

Ghana still has a large out of school population particularly across the three northern regions which make up 20 % of the out of school population (6-11 years of age) for the entire country. The Northern Region contributes 10.6% of Ghana’s out of school population, the Upper East contributing 5.4% and Upper West 3.36%. The out of school population in the Northern Region shows a sharp decline over the year (2005/06) however these are still provisional estimates from the Ministry of Education. The general trend over the last few years is that the out of school population has stayed much the same varying between 175,403 children to 177,495 over the four year span (see Figure 2 below).

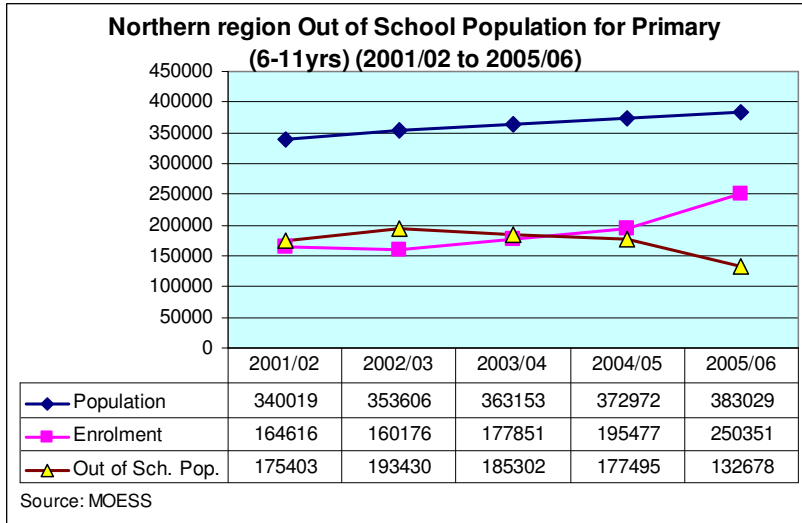
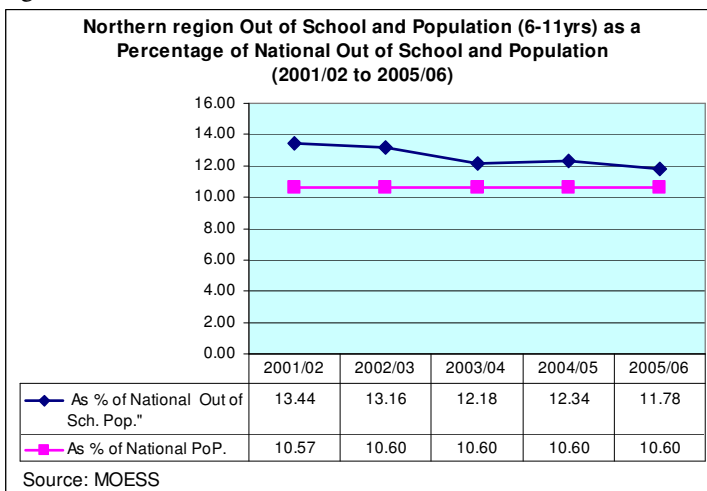


Figure 2 : Northern Region Out of School Population for Primary (6-11yrs) (2001/02 to 2005/06)

The Northern Region continues to have one of the highest proportions of out of school children particularly at the primary level when compared to other regions such as the Upper East and Upper West (see Annex 8). Currently the Northern Region has an out of school population of 132,678 at the primary level (6-11 years of age) which accounts for 11.78% of the total out of school population in Ghana. The out of school population in the 6-11 year cohort is also higher (11.78) than the total population of the age cohort 6-11 within the overall population (10.60%).

Figure 3:



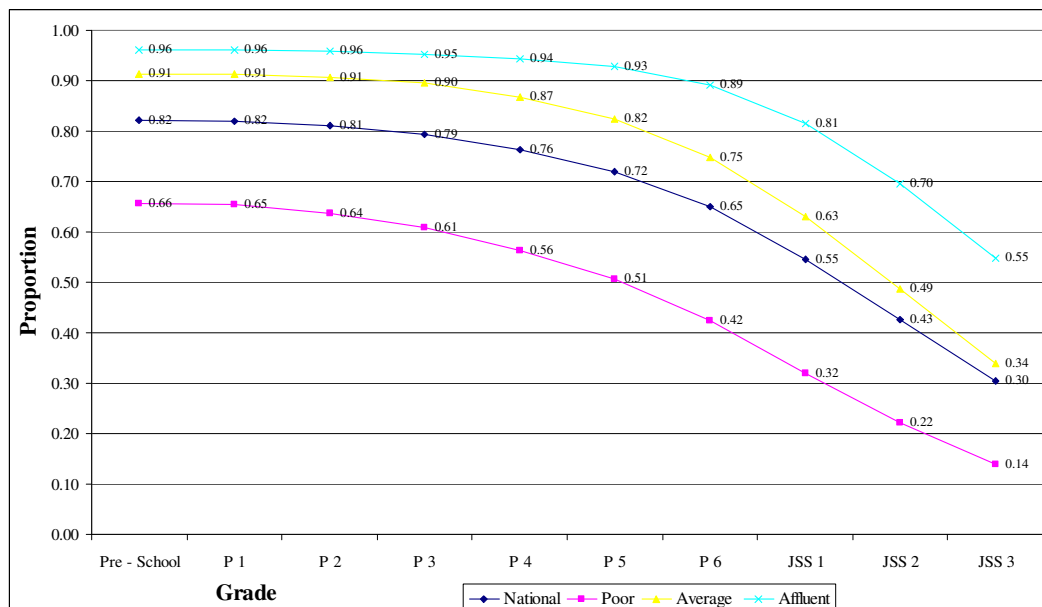
The Upper East has the next highest out of school population with over 52,821 children out of school in 2005/06 followed by the Upper West with 36,411. These numbers increase considerably when analysing the out of school population data at the JSS level for the 12-14 age cohort.

Educational Attainment of Children in Northern Ghana

Studies by Wumbee⁸ 2007 indicate that the rates of educational attainment among Ghanaian children depend on the residence of the child (rural or urban), region and the socio-economic background of the family (poor or wealthy). Recent research by Wumbee (2007) indicates the following:

- Very few children from “poor” households attain primary six (P6) and JSS 3 level of schooling compared to the more “affluent” households in northern Ghana. Using a statistical projection for northern Ghana based on CWIQ data (2003), his study indicates that only 15% of children from the “poor” quintile across Ghana complete JSS3 and only 4% of children from poor households from the Northern Region complete basic education (JSS 3)⁹ (see Figure 4).
- At the primary level, 42% of the poor quintile nationally complete P6 compared to only 15% of children from the “poor” quintile from the Northern Region. Therefore, despite the positive trends in enrolment across Ghana, educational completion among children in the Northern Region remains a major challenge.
- Children across the three northern regions are far less likely to complete basic education than their counterparts in southern Ghana. Trends in Western and Central Regions correspond to the national average while more deprived regions such as the three northern regions, Volta Region and Brong Ahafo Region exhibit the worst trends in relation to educational attainment and completion.

Figure 4: Educational Attainment in Ghana



(Source: Wumbee, 2007)

Quality of Education in Ghana

⁸ Wumbee, J. “The Effect of Household Wealth on Educational Attainment in Ghana” (AFC Working Paper 5).

⁹ Unlike several other Sub Saharan African Countries Junior Secondary School (JSS3) is the terminal point and basic level of education provided by the state: Government of Ghana. It is expected that all children in Ghana will complete Primary and JSS in order to qualify for their Basic Education Certificate.

The most recent data on BECE results from the MOESS suggest that there was very little variation in national performance between 2002 and 2006. Table 1 below indicates that between 2002/2003 the percentage of pupils gaining aggregate 6-30 was between 61.6% and 62% of the population.¹⁰ Performance in the BECE declined in 2005 especially across the 40 deprived districts. These districts were also among those who experienced a large increase in enrolment due to the capititation grant.

Table 1: BECE Examination entrants

BECE examination entrants gaining aggregate 6,30	2002-2003	2003-2004	2005-06
% Gaining Aggregate 6-30 National	61.6%	61.3%	62%
% Gaining Aggregate 6-30 in Northern Region	n/a	51.1%	47%
% Gaining Aggregate 6-30 in Upper East Region	n/a	50.6%	55%
% Gaining Aggregate 6-30 in Upper West Region	n/a	60.8%	55%
% Gaining Aggregate 6-30 in 40 deprived districts	n/a	51.1%	49%
% Gaining Aggregate 6-30 in other districts	n/a	63.5%	62.2%

Studies by the Northern Network for Educational Development (NNED) indicate that the Northern Region does not perform well in the BECE compared to their southern counterparts. Trends on BECE results collected over a three year period (2003 to 2005) indicate that only 51.5% of those who sat for the BECE, qualified for entry into SSS. Unfortunately the trend shows declining numbers of people qualifying for SSS. 2005/06 BECE data on results across some of the northern districts are presented below. It reveals that the predominantly rural northern regions (Savelugu, West Mamprusie and Yendi) perform much below their urban counterparts in the south and north of the country.

Finally, recent research on literacy attainment among Ghanaian children indicates that only 20-25% of the school going age population are able to master basic skills of reading and writing in English by Primary 6. This literacy rate is much worst for the rural poor population of children and better for the urban based children (MOESS, 2006)¹¹.

4.0 Key findings of Sfl Programme Level Impact: access, retention and quality

“In my district the impact has been tremendous. Most of the graduates have managed to continue their education from P1 to P3 and some have risen up to P6 and JSS. We have recorded a good number of them at the SSS level and some have even managed to attend the University and one is in the nursing training college.”(District Director of Education, Northern Region).

Reaching a Significant Scale

¹⁰ The BECE is the examination taken at the end of the basic education cycle, which determines whether or not a pupil is able to progress on to second cycle education. It is the main outcome indicator used to assess the quality of basic education available on a longitudinal basis.

¹¹ National Examination Assessment Data for 2006 is the latest Government data available on literacy and numeracy testing across P3 and P6 cohorts of the school going population.

Probably the most important achievement which is catching the attention of the International Development community is the degree to which School for Life is reaching scale and helping large numbers of out of school children in northern Ghana become literate, remain literate and enter higher levels of formal education.

Over 85,000 children have been enrolled in the School for Life cycle of learning and 55,606 of these children have been integrated in the formal education system. Trends in enrolment, drop out, and graduation reveal encouraging results across the ten active Sfl districts in the Northern Region. Data collected during Phase 1 of the IA indicate that, a total of **85,073** children, made up of 49,610 males and 35,463 females, enrolled in the Sfl programme (see Table 2) and a total of 79,394 have graduated¹².

Table 2: Number of Classes, Enrolment, Dropout, Graduation and Integration in the 10 districts (July 2006).

District	Year	No of classes	Initial enrolment			No of drop out			Graduation			Integ	
			Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	
Gushegu	1995/6 – 2005/6	505	12,337	7,557	4,780	1,103	566	537	11,234	6,991	4,243	4,342	
Karaga	1995/6 – 2005/6	467	11,853	6,893	4,960	670	330	340	11,183	6,563	4,620	8,660	
Yendi	1995/6 – 2005/6	395	9,727	5,133	4,594	770	340	430	8,957	4,793	4,164	6,702	
Savelugu	1997/8 – 2005/6	440	10,820	6,840	3,980	555	268	287	10,265	6,572	3,693	4,803	
Nanton	1997/8 – 2005/6	395	9,847	5,415	4,432	889	422	467	8,958	5,029	3,929	7,632	
Zabzugu	1999/00 – 2005/6	350	8,750	5,048	3,702	124	53	71	8,626	4,993	3,633	6,772	
Tatale	1999/00 – 2005/6	350	8,750	5,487	3,263	680	347	333	8,070	5,140	2,930	5,118	
Tamale	1999/00 – 2005/6	340	8,494	4,698	3,796	579	227	352	7,915	4,471	3,444	7,707	
Rural	2004/5 – 2005/6	80	1,999	1,113	886	155	84	71	1,844	1,020	824	1,519	
Nanumba	2004/5 – 2005/6	100	2,496	1,426	1,070	97	43	54	2,399	1,383	1,016	2,351	
Saboba	1999/00 – 2005/6	340	8,494	4,698	3,796	579	227	352	7,915	4,471	3,444	7,707	
Chereponi	1999/00 – 2005/6	340	8,494	4,698	3,796	579	227	352	7,915	4,471	3,444	7,707	
Tolon	1999/00 – 2005/6	340	8,494	4,698	3,796	579	227	352	7,915	4,471	3,444	7,707	
Kumbongu	1999/00 – 2005/6	340	8,494	4,698	3,796	579	227	352	7,915	4,471	3,444	7,707	
East Gonja	2004/5 – 2005/6	80	1,999	1,113	886	155	84	71	1,844	1,020	824	1,519	
West Mamprusi	2004/5 – 2005/6	100	2,496	1,426	1,070	97	43	54	2,399	1,383	1,016	2,351	
Total	1995/6 – 2005/6	3,422	85,073	49,610	35,463	5,622	2,680	2,942	79,451	46,930	32,521	55,606	3

The Sfl drop out data also reveals a relatively low drop out rate with only 5,622 (6.61%) of the 85,037 Sfl entrants having dropped out. Total drop out also varies across the districts and by gender. There is a slightly higher proportion of girls dropping out with of 2,680 males (3.15%) and 2,942 females (3.46%) having dropped out over the last 10 years although the difference does not appear significant.

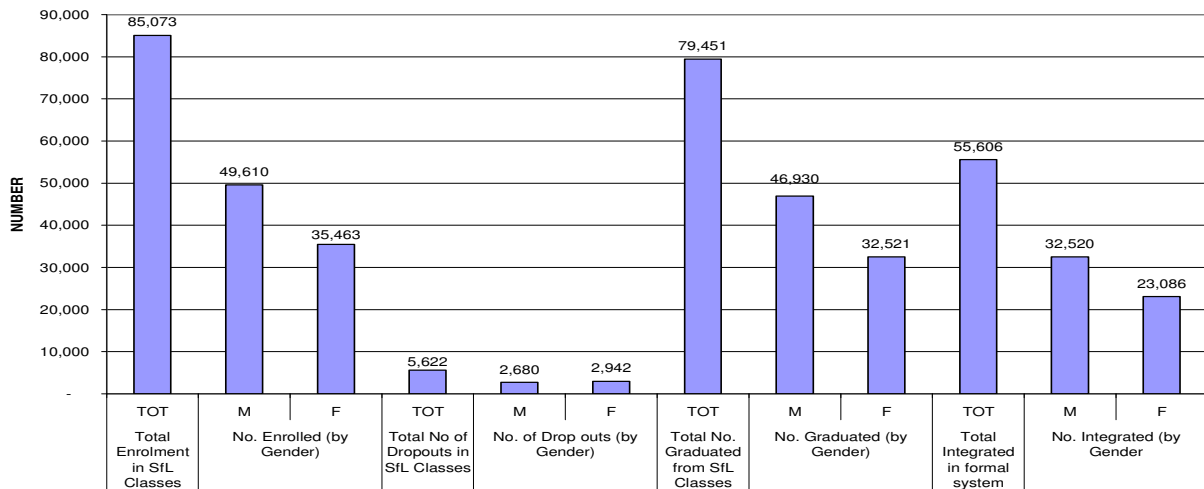
¹² This does not include a total of 35,200 expect to be enrolled under USAID supported program EQUALL. A total of 15,000 Sflers are expected to graduate from the EQUALL/Sfl program by Sept. 2007.

Scale of Enrolment, Completion, and Integration into the formal system

“SfL has made a large impact on improving access in the Sawla-Tuna Kalba District. In the Vagla communities for instance, 325 learners have enrolled and about 90% of them have passed out and are being mainstreamed into the normal school system. In the Brifo communities about 300 have been enrolled in school. These children would otherwise would not been enrolled. (District Director of Education, Sawla Tuna Kalba.)¹³

A total of 55,606 (65.36 %) SfLers made up of 32,520 males and 23,086 females were integrated into the formal school system over the last 10 years between 1995/96 to 2005/06. This represents 69.9% of the total that graduated from the SfL programme and represents a significant achievement given the fact that the first phase of SfL was not particularly focused on ensuring integration. Levels of integration have consistently increased over the last 12 years despite the endemic barriers to access which include the high poverty incidence and negative socio-cultural attitudes which often prevent girls from attainment in the system (i.e. early marriage, child fosterage to “aunties”, and betrothal practices)(see Annex 3 for more details).

Figure 5: Total Enrolment, Dropouts, Graduation and Integration of SfL Learners (1995/96 – 2005/06)



SfL is showing remarkable achievement in the areas of assisting the formal system reduce drop out and improve retention of children particularly among girls. Interviews with head teachers across the nine selected community/schools indicate that ex SfL children are less likely to drop out of school due to their determination and interest in achieving higher levels of education once they are placed in the school system. Results

¹³ Vagla and Brifo communities are minority ethnic groups in the Bole and Sawla Tuna Districts of Northern Region.

from the SfL literacy test also indicate that ex SfL performance in literacy (at P6 level) is commensurate to their non SfL counterparts who have had five to six years of formal schooling.

Retention rates in the Formal System of Education

Another key indicator of SfL impact is in the area of integration within the formal education system. On average, retention rates of integrated SfLers in the formal system between 2002 and 2005, was 92.7% (see Annex 4 for full data set). Retention rates for boys and girls were 94.8% and 97.1% respectively. The rate declined in P6 to 93.2% with boys having 90.4% and girls 100%. Retention rates for SfL girls in P4 and P5 was higher than that of boys. This may be attributed to higher demands for boys' labour on the farms particularly as they reach higher ages (Casely-Hayford, 2000).

In terms of completion, the initial intake in 2002 of 220 SfL pupils (115 boys and 105 girls) in P3 across the four districts, declined slightly in 2005 when they reached P6 (196). There were a total of 196 pupils (103 boys and 93 girls) who were able to complete the full cycle of primary education. The overall completion rate of this cohort of SfL integrants was 89.1% which is very good when compared to the national completion rates for Northern Ghana which recorded 89.6% for boys and 88.16% for girls.

Comparatively, retention rates for non SfLers were slightly higher than those of SfLers although the quantitative data did not conform to what was found during qualitative field work. The quantitative data revealed that the average rate of retention was 99.0% over the four year period from P3 to P6 for non SfLers compared to 92.7% for SfLers, although this may be due to the smaller number of SfLers within the formal system.

Promotion rates among SfLers integrated into the formal system

The SfL graduates are mostly admitted to P3 being the final grade of lower primary after a Placement Assessment Test by the GES officers at the district level. Some SfLers are placed in P4 and P5. In all the sampled IA study districts, the promotion rates of the SfLers were very high, ranging between 97.7% (2003) and 92.9% (2005). A total of 220 pupils were integrated in the formal school system in 2002 across the four IA study districts. Overall promotion rates that year were 97.7% with boys recording 96.5% and girls recording 99.1%. The rate of progression from P4 to P5 in 2004 was 98.1% with boys attaining 95.8% and girls attaining 100%. The total percentage promoted to P6 in 2005 was 92.9% with boys recording 97.2% and girls 88.6%¹⁴. The rate of progression tilts slightly in favour of boys with a gender parity index of 0.954 from P3 to P6 level, but overall, girls were progressing at a higher rate from P3 to P5. Studies in northern Ghana suggest that the more girls move in the primary school system, particularly from P5 and P6 onwards, there is less likelihood that they will continue school due to the socio-cultural practices mentioned above (Casely-Hayford with Wilson, 2001).

Girls Education

¹⁴ 88.6% of girls were able to get to the final year. This is due to drop out or repetition.

The high retention rates and significant impact on the lives of girls has been a major finding from both phases of the IA research. The findings suggest that a high proportion of girls are entering the formal education system as a result of SfL (32,521 girls graduated from the SfL programme out of which 23,086 girls were integrated into the formal education system). Given the numbers of out of school children over the last five years this is a significant programme contribution to increasing the NER and GER in the Northern Region. Overall the integration rates among girls are encouraging due to the high level of socio-cultural stigma against girls' education in northern Ghana. Studies over the last 20 years suggest that families in the Northern Region have a peculiar problem in supporting girls' access to formal education due to the perceptions of parents and the importance placed on investing in the boy child (Sutherland Addy, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2000). Results from the IA tracer study indicate that SfL has made a major impact in helping parents rethink the value of girls' education and contribute to the improvement of their status as a valuable human resource for their family and the community.

Quality

Reports from the Ministry of Education and interviews with SfL target communities attest to the high quality of the SfL programme. Interviews with District Directors of Education across four districts involved in the IA study confirm that one of the reasons for programme success is its high quality. District and Regional Directors of education identified the keys to SfL success as the following:

- Medium of instruction: mother tongue (L1);
- Simple and effective methodology: “this can be attitude to the use of syllabic and phonic methods in the teaching of literacy” (District Director of Education, Gushiegu Karaga, Northern Region Ghana)....” ;
- One to one book ratio;
- Ability of children to take the books home;
- Small class sizes (25 maximum);
- High degree of monitoring, on site supervision and training provided by the programme; and
- Flexible school hours adjusted to the needs of the community.

District Directors across three districts interviewed during the replication workshop gave the programme the highest rating of 5 out of 5 since: “the understanding levels of the SfL learners is high and they are able to cope with their classmates in the P1-P3 levels due to the special methodologies used in lesson delivery...(District Director of Education Gusheigu, Northern Region).” The IA tracer field work confirmed that parents perceive SfL gives higher quality delivery of education compared to the formal education system. Focal group discussions with a cross section of SfL and non SfL parents revealed their belief that Sflers are better able to read and write in comparison to their siblings who attend formal school. Parents spoke of how they use their SfL children to read simple instructions, letters and other material as their other children attending the formal school

were still struggling to write their names. Evidence from three IA focal districts confirms that some parents are withdrawing their children from the formal system to join SfL classes due to the assurance that SfL children will attain basic reading and writing skills. Interviews with several SfLers at the SSS and JSS level in Savelugu, Gushegu and Yendi confirm that children were taken out of the formal system to attend SfL classes in order ensure that a basic level of literacy was attained before they were taken back to the formal system. This phenomena appears more visible over recent years as parents are becoming increasingly aware of the impact that the SfL programme is having in relation to child literacy attainment at the same time the formal system is diminishing in quality.

Stakeholder groups interviewed at the community levels as well as the GES and District Assemblies across the three study districts shared perspectives on the key contributions of SfL to the formal education system in the district and region. District officials outlined several contributions SfL has made over the last 12 years, including: the provision of infrastructure, furniture, teaching and learning materials to schools, and training of teachers at the primary level in the local language teaching methodology. Other contributions cited included facilitating access to formal education, enhancing enrolment and retention in schools and facilitating girl-child education. Nanumba District was also keeping records of the achievements of Sflers by tracking them through the system and recognized that several Sflers were attaining higher levels of education (SSS and Tertiary).

Infrastructure, Furniture, Teaching and Learning materials provision

Infrastructure and furniture provided by SfL between 1995 and 2006 amounted to ₵4,049,503,791 (US\$ 674,917)¹⁵. Of this amount, ₵288,700,000 went into the construction of 25 teachers' quarters, ₵3,363,707,791 for the construction of 108 pavilions and ₵397,096,000 for the supply of 408 sets of furniture (see Annex 7 for details). This has improved the infrastructure and furniture situation in most communities and provided the much needed classroom and teacher accommodation to cope with the increasing number of children enrolled at the primary level. It has also helped to ease the acute teacher accommodation problems in some communities in the districts. Other logistical support supplied by SfL included motor bicycles supplied to SfL Desk Officers in the Gushegu/Karaga and Yendi Districts for their monitoring and supervision activities.

SfL has also made a significant contribution to the formal education system by providing training since 2002. A total of 90 primers per school have been supplied to 431 primary schools in the 10 participating districts between 2002 and 2006. This has helped to improve the core text book ratio and lack of books in the formal system and has enhanced the teaching of local language in the schools. Table 3 reveals that 660 teachers have received in-service training in the SfL methodology and are applying this approach in their classrooms.

Table 3: Number of Teachers Trained under SfL

¹⁵ We have used 6,000 cedis as an approximate US dollar figure for the last 12 years (averaged).

Year	Name of district	Number of teachers trained	Number of schools involved in training programme.	Approx number of books provided per school
2002	Yendi	60	40	120
	Gushegu/Karaga	60	40	120
2004	Tolon/Bumbunbu	50	40	120
	Savelugu Nanton	50	35	120
	Nanumba	50	30	120
	Zabzugu/Tatale	50	30	120
2005	Sabboba/Chereponi	50	46	120
	Tamale Rural	50	50	120
2006	Yendi	60	30	150
	East Gonja	60	30	150
	Gushegu	60	30	150
	West Mamprusi	60	30	150
	Total	660	431	1,560

Literacy attainment among of SfLers and their Non SfL counterparts

Random tests in the local language conducted among learners in selected communities in the 10 participating districts in 2005/06 showed that out of 399 learners tested in the exercise, 169 learners (42.4%) scored between 70% and 100%. Of the remainder, 112 (28.1%) scored between 50% and 69%, while 118 (29.6%) scored between 0% and 49%. This performance demonstrates the abilities of SfL learners to read and write in the local language and translates into the high level of performance SfL learners in the other subject areas such as English, Mathematics and the Local Languages, when integrated into the formal school system.

A literacy test was conducted by the IA team at the primary 6 and JSS3 level for SfL and non SfL learners to test their English reading fluency. The results revealed that on the average, the SfLers at the primary level performed the same as their non SfLer counterparts across the three districts and communities in which the tests were conducted. At the JSS level, ex SfLers competed favourably with their non SfL counterparts. A closer survey of the mean performance gives the indication that the reading skills of the SfL graduates are the same as their non SfL counterparts. Subjecting the data to the t-Test at all levels of desegregation reveals that there is no significant difference between the reading fluency of SfL graduates and non SfL graduates (see Annex 11)¹⁶. The literacy testing results of SfLers and non SfLers reveals that despite the fact that non SfLers have had at least three to four more years of formal schooling (P1 to P4) this has not made a significant difference to literacy attainment when compared to the literacy levels reached of ex SfLers.

¹⁶ The IA team is in the process of revisiting the data from this test.

Assessment of SfL graduates in primary 4-6

Another exercise to assess the overall literacy achievement among SfLers integrated in the formal system included an assessment of the school results of ex SfLers at the Primary 4-6 level who were in the second term of the 2005/06 year in English, Maths and Ghanaian Language across five selected schools in each district. The exercise revealed that the SfL graduates competed favourably with their counterparts (non SfL in the same class). It was noted that the proportion of SfL learners scoring above class average in all the three subject areas ranged between 43% and 100% and for the non SfL learners it ranged between 20% and 67%. Overall, the performance of the SfL graduates was higher than the non SfLs in all the 3 subject areas across the sampled schools. Across different class levels and schools from P4 to P6 (rural and town) SfL graduates on the average outperformed the non SfLs in all the 3 subjects. The performance however varied from school to school.

These findings are corroborated by head teachers, teachers and non SfLers who were interviewed across the three field work districts and were in the same classes as the ex SfLers. They reported that SfLers were performing much better than their non SfL counterparts in the classroom and on examinations. Termly reports and examinations suggested that the SfLers were stronger in subjects such as Ghanaian Language which helped them to learn to read in the English Language and improve their performance in other subject areas. Focal group discussions with non SfLers confirmed that they noticed a significant difference in the skills and aptitudes of the SfLers particularly in reading and writing; many non SfLers expressed regret at not joining the SfL programme when it was offered in their community as they since realized that it would have helped them to read and write in both the Dagbani and English Language.

Interviews with SfLers and teachers in the Senior Secondary Schools in the three IA study districts (Gushegu/Karaga, Yendi and Nanumba Districts) indicate the high performance levels of the SfLers. It was noted that for three consecutive years (2004 – 2006) the SfLers had the best aggregates in the Gushegu/Karaga Districts. In 2004, the best aggregate in the district was 16; in 2005 it was 13; and in 2006 it was aggregate 20. All of these were obtained by SfLers. In the Nanumba district an ex SfLer topped the 2006 BECE results with aggregate 14.

5.0 Key findings from the Tracer Study: Impacts at the Individual, Family and Community Level.

5.1 Impact at the Individual level: Knowledge and Skills

Development projects around the world often attain short term and medium term developmental results. This impact study revealed that the SfL programme was touching the roots of the problems of endemic poverty and helping address longer term challenges associated with poverty and illiteracy particularly among the youth. The SfL programme was of high quality, systematic in nature and contained the key elements to ensuring literacy attainment within the focus population. This had far reaching results in relation to

the attitudinal and behaviour shifts needed to address the core problems of educational access, retention and poverty reduction in northern Ghana. Findings from the IA suggest that ex Sflers were not only breaking through to mother tongue literacy but were also sharing the knowledge, skills and lessons learned from books and instruction with their friends at school and family members. Findings across the three focal IA districts from 77 in-depth interviews with over 26 non Sflers and their families revealed that SfL classes made an impact on changing the behaviour of the individual SfLer in relation to his/ her:

- Treatment and care of the environment;
- Personal hygiene and sanitation practice;
- Knowledge of family planning and need for small family size to reduce poverty; and
- Improved farming and animal rearing practices.

Much of the knowledge and skills acquired by the Sflers was shared with their families and friends when they entered the formal education system. In-depth interviews with ex Sflers revealed that the lessons learned in the SfL programme after three, six and nine years of completion had a tremendous impact on the behaviour of the Sfler in his/her relation to the environment, his family and future aspirations in life. Ex Sflers interviewed at the Primary, Junior Secondary and SSS level consistently revealed that they had a high level of determination, humility and respect for their parents. It was recognized that SfL had “given them a chance in life” to succeed. Most spoke of how they would never have entered the formal system nor attained a higher level of education if it was not for SfL.

Values, attitudes and behaviours

The IA revealed that SfL had a lasting impact on ex Sflers’ values, attitudes and behaviours in relation to their culture and the society around them. In-depth interviews with Sflers, their non SfLer friends and family revealed that Sflers had acquired a deeper appreciation of their culture and service to the community through the SfL program. Most spoke of their commitment to assisting their families and communities in future through the professions and future direction they intended to pursue. In-depth interviews with ex Sflers at JSS and SSS levels indicated that they were aware of the negative cultural and farming practices which were impeding growth in their community (e.g. early marriage, child fostering, and betrothal; bush burning etc). They were also determined to reduce their own family sizes, recognized the importance of girls’ education and the protection of their environment. Interviews revealed that even several years after intervention, ex Sflers spoke vividly of the impact the programme had made on their lives and the fact they would not have attained their current education level if it were not for SfL giving them the chance in life.

Interviews with non Sflers counterparts and teachers also showed that Sflers were considered to be more respectful, determined, attentive and confident in class. They were willing to assist others who were not as conversant with the Dagbani language and often acted as teacher assistants. Teachers across the nine IA community/school areas spoke of how the Sflers were often selected to be the School and Class prefects due to their good

character and values. Life stories of the ex SfLers revealed that most ex SfLers were the only ones left in the family to help on the farm and were not likely to be sent to school if they had not shown an ability to read and write after the SfL program.

Breaking through to literacy

Interviews with the 54 ex SfLers who were integrated in the formal school system across 9 communities revealed the ways SfL had assisted them “break through to literacy” and how they had translated these skills into learning to read English. The key findings suggest that:

- Encouragement, patience and commitment exhibited by SfL facilitators in using the methodology was the key to helping “out of school” children break through to literacy.
- Children interviewed were well aware of the methodological reasons they had succeeded in learning to read and write. They attributed these to the usage of the mother tongue, syllabic and phonic approaches used by SfL; and getting a book to take home and read. Most spoke of how they had used these same methods to learn to read the English Language.
- The main differences cited by SfLers between the SfL programme and the formal school system were: the availability of free books; ability to take the books home to read; uniform requirements; timing of the class; and medium of instruction. Several spoke of the usage of the syllabic drill which was not a method used in the formal system.
- The cultural relevancy and inner meaning of the curriculum touched the hearts of the SfLers and had a profound impact on helping learners build their confidence in learning to read at an older age.

One of the most important findings from the IA research was that the children felt deeply connected to the SfL curriculum and SfL programme as a whole. After having completed SfL over seven to ten years ago ex SfLers were still able to identify one or two stories which had an impact on their ability to read. Ex learners spoke of their connection to themes in the curriculum which had meaning in their everyday lives such as “the cow (Nahu) or M Paga Amina (story on family planning).” The SfL approach had a transformative impact on the learners by building their self esteem, self identity and literacy skills through meaningful curriculum.

Another key finding was in relation to the hope and aspirations of the children who had entered SfL. In-depth interviews with ex SfLers evidenced how their confidence had increased which in turn had helped them improve their performance in the SfL class and understanding how to read first in local language and then in English once they entered the formal system. The same fundamental approaches to reading in their mother tongue (phonic and syllabic) were used by ex SfLers to read in the English language. The ex SfLers at all levels in the system spoke of how the phonetic awareness and syllabic approaches used in the SfL lessons had helped them to sound out letters and words... “this helped us to read in the English language ourselves...”. The emerging confidence of SfLers was a great factor in helping retain them within the formal education system since

many had to overcome numerous obstacles to remain in school (e.g. lack of finances, lack of parental support, pressure to work on the family farm, and pressure to carry out their family responsibilities at the home).

Differences between SfLers and non Sflers were many. Interviews with non SfLers who were participating in the same class in the formal system with the ex Sflers, spoke of the studious and serious nature of the SfLers to learn even when teachers were not around; they also spoke of how the ex Sflers were more disciplined, confident and well behaved. The table below presents some of the highlights from ex SfLers life stories and the impact the programme had on their lives.

One of the most important impacts revealed through the IA research was the renewed hope which the SfL programme brings to children who “would not have otherwise been enrolled in school.” Findings from the IA suggest that the children enrolled in the SfL programme were from the “reserve” grouping in the family who were earmarked to assist on the family farm, help an invalid grandmother or be traded off to an “Auntie” to train and prepare for marriage. This is the grouping of children who are often termed “hard to reach” since they are hidden from school authorities as they were needed at the home and on the farm (Casely-Hayford, 2000). The IA study suggests that the effectiveness of the SfL programme in gives parents, as well as the children themselves, hope that they can be a “somebody.”

Ex School for Lifer	Before	After
Primary Level Interviews		
Fulera Kofi Nawuhugu Primary 5, Gushegu district. Completed SfL in 2002 (Girl)	“I was given to my sister to take care of her children. There was no formal school in our community again, so I was taking care of my sister’s children”	“I was able to read and write in Likpakpaaln (my mother tongue). I was happy because I could read and write. My reasoning changed after SfL”
Danaa Maayen, Nawuhugu Primary 5, Gushegu district. Completed SfL in 2002	“I followed my father to farm. There was no formal school in the village again due to the conflict”	“After completing SfL, I stayed at home for 2 years helping my parents on the farm before I integrated into the formal school. I was happy I could read and write. My father changed his attitude because after two years I could still read and write.”
Kwesi Najo, Bachabordo E. Primary 5, Yendi. Completed SfL in 2004 (Girl)	“I am a girl of 13 years old. Before I entered SfL I use to help my mother on the farm work, as a girl to plant grains like beans, corn, etc. I also go with my peers to fetch water when we are at home. I did not attend to school because my mother was sick and my father saw that I needed to support her in the farm and with household work”.	“I saw that after I completed SfL I was enlightened and my attitude changed. I began to respect my parents. I did not wait to be instructed to do what was right in the house, but at times used my own initiative. My parents also saw that I could now read and write so they were happy and allowed me to continue to formal school”.
Alhassan Latifa, Makayili Primary 5, Nanumba district. Completed SfL in 2004 (Girl)	“My father has no means that was why he could not send me to school. My parents wanted me to attend school but they had no means because my father is a sickler”.	“I was able to read and write in my local language. Before SfL I did not care about anything but after SfL I now know that I should do something with my life. Before SfL when my mother sent me I refused but now I go. I did nothing but roamed from house to house, but now I am sensible. At first I attended dance and video and now I don’t”.
Nachimpoan Ernest, Makayili, Makayili Primary 5, Nanumba. Completed SfL in 2004	“I used to go to the farm with my mother because my father died when I was still young. My father died when I was still a small boy. I used to follow my mother to the farm to plant yam because I am the first born. My mother was interested in education but could not afford to send me to school. My mother has gone to school up to JSS.”	“After SfL I got integrated in P3. I felt happy and proud that I was able to read and write and I wanted to be in formal school. Because I saw that my age mates were going ahead of me in education and their lives will eventually change more than mine. My mother allowed me to go to school because she saw that I was interested in learning”
JSS Interviews		
Iddrisu Jibril (Kpabia JSS community, Yendi) <i>Completed in 2000 now attending JSS 2, five years in the formal education system.</i>	“I used to go to farm because I was not sent to school and at the farm we had fowls which I catered for. I did not attend school because my parents did not know the importance of education and did not like schooling until I forced them. At home I was idling about and at the farm I took care of fowls. They (my parents) did not have interest for education as at that time...”	“I was very happy after I completed SFL and could read and write because I was able to read letters for my parents and also distinguish various cards for them (hospital, prescriptions, receipts and others). My parents developed an interest in education. They encouraged me to continue with my education”.

Ex School for Lifer	Before	After
<p>Agnes Mabel, (Bakpaba JSS, Nanumba District)</p> <p><i>Completed SFL in 2003 was integrated at P5 and now attending JSS2, four years in the formal system.</i></p>	<p>“My father had 3 wives with 10 children 4 are my mother’s children. I am the fourth children of my mother and the only one to have attended SfL. I lost my father before I attained the school going age. I was therefore enrolled in SfL class by my brother who was the SfL facilitator. Before attending SfL I use to help my mother on the farm and at home with various house chores (taking care of younger siblings, fetching water and cleaning). My parents were interested in education and had enrolled 2 of my senior brothers”.</p>	<p>“After School for Life I was so happy that I could now read and write because when I was at home. I could not read nor write. SfL offered me an opportunity and I did well to it and now I’m in JSS 2. I was interested in education so when we completed SfL and my colleagues were continuing, I also told my mother and she allowed me. My mother sent me to formal education because she saw that I could be someone in future and I could help her. I hope to give my mum what ever she will need within my ability.</p>
	<p>“I was a cowboy before joining SFL class at the age of 9. I also reared animals such as sheep, goats, and fowls and also helped my father on the farm. Any time I felt hungry I killed people’s fowls and guinea fowls to eat. My parents attitude towards education was negative especially my father who thought that all educated persons were lazy and useless because they did not want to work on the farm.”</p>	<p>“SfL helped me greatly in reading and writing Dagbani. In fact I was happy that I could read and write in Dagbani. When I completed SFL I could now read letters and write in Dagbani for my father who started to look for assistance from outside to educate me further.... My father sent me to school after my Uncle educated him on the importance of education. Who told him that I could still farm even better after attaining education”.</p>
SSS level interviews		
<p>Musah Ibrahim, Gushegu SSS 2 Agric., completed SfL in 1999, enrolled in P 4 and now in SSS 2</p>	<p>“I was not attending school but came across SfL through a friend. I informed my father and he enrolled me. Many of my siblings (5) were attending and the burden was too much for my father so he said I should not go to school. I was helping my father on the farm. I was 13 when I started SfL. My parents liked education very much but they were very poor. Because they liked education that is why they sent my elder siblings to school. It was my sister who forced my father to send me to SfL. When I completed SfL, it was my sister who sponsored me to primary and JSS. Unfortunately, she died before I complete JSS”.</p>	<p>“I was very happy when I finished SfL because I could read and write in Dagbani. If I compare myself to my colleagues who did not go to school I feel very happy. They can’t read and write but I can. Some of them are even married and can not afford to take care of their families. When my colleagues see me they confess to me that they have regretted. They have very high regard for me. My mother and sister who took care of me are dead now, but my father is very proud of me. He is very old now (62 years) but I work to take care of myself in school. During vacations I work on people’s farms to get money to take care of myself.”</p>
<p>Sugri Jamilatu, (Female Ex-SfLer in SSS 2 at Yendi SSS. she enrolled in P 3</p>	<p>“Born to a father with three wives, 15 children, I never thought I would ever be in school as I am a girl. For my father had sent 4 siblings to school already. I was helping my mother in her “koko” business and other household chores. One day a friend invited me to SfL which I did not know of. I informed my mother about it who reminded me the following day. That was how I got to school. I was surprised at my own performance. In fact, my parents liked education but not all the children were in school. They had no reason for not sending me to school but I think it had to do with funds”.</p>	<p>“By the end of the 9 months, I was able to read and write Dagbani and perform some basic calculations. I was so excited about it. Before the SfL, anytime I was free, I used to roam about or play, but when I started SfL, I used such free time to study. Now I easily run errands for my parents and feel more productive and tolerant than before SfL. I have confidence and speak reasonably. My parents like education and I do my best to excel. I respect the elderly also.”</p>

5.2 Impact at the family level

I taught my family how to take drugs and avoid drug abuse. I also teach my mother how to prepare balanced meals for us – using vegetables, fruits, beans and other carbohydrates. Now we don't abuse drugs, we eat balanced meals, we keep our surroundings clean and don't practice bush burning.” - Seidu Anass, Ex SfLer SSS 2 Arts, Welensi Secondary School (SSS), Nanumba South District.

The main impact of the SfL programme at the family level is as follows:

- There was a significant shift in parental attitudes towards education, schooling and supporting children's education after the SfL class was completed. This change in attitude mainly occurred after the child could read and write in their local language as parents were encouraged by the concrete outcomes of the programme. They could ask their children to help them read important instructions and documents.
- Girl child education was seen from a different perspective after the SfLer had completed the programme and once parents realized that their girls had the same potential to read and write as their boys had.

In-depth interviews with families confirmed that many families were continuing to practice good personal and environmental hygiene; and some families had stopped bush burning and adopted more effective farming practices. Some very progressive families adopted the family planning approaches to reduce family size. Separate and comparative interviews with ex Sflers and their families across the nine communities revealed that many SfLers had carried the messages and information they were learning from the SfL class back to their families and siblings in their homes. Despite the long absence from the programme, intervention families still remembered the developmental lessons and were continuing to practice good personal and social hygiene.

Increased Knowledge and Practice

In-depth interviews with families and ex SfLers, both integrated and non integrated across communities in the three study districts revealed the extent to which the knowledge and skills acquired by the SfL families had been internalized and applied. The IA team found a high level of awareness related to the importance of education which motivated most families to integrate their children into the formal system after the nine month cycle. About 65% (50 out of 77) parents interviewed had enrolled their children in the formal school system. According to the District Directors of Education across the three IA study districts, this was leading to high enrolment levels in the formal schools in the localities. Data from the first phase also confirmed that on average about (60%) of children have transitioned from SfL to the formal school system over the 12 years of operation.

The ex SfLer families interviewed spoke of how the children had helped them to read and write their letters and keep records of their business activities. Lessons from the primers on malaria prevention, drug abuse, sustainable management of the environment, water and sanitation, family planning as well as peace and security had led to cleaner environments as evidenced by the clean surroundings of the communities visited. Families continued to filter their water to avoid guinea worm infestation, and drug abuse was significantly reduced.¹⁷. All 77 families interviewed indicated that guinea worm had been eradicated in their communities and they were practicing safe water protection as a result of the SfL programme. Other knowledge/ practice issues identified in the study included the increasing appreciation of the importance of family planning; the need for small family sizes; and the reduction in child fostering, child betrothal and child exchange (a practice whereby females born into a family are exchanged for females in other families for marriage). These were noteworthy behaviour pattern changes in families where cultural tradition is strong, and education sometimes seen as a transformative evil.

Story of Agnes Mabel Influence on the perception change in “Exchanging Girl-Children for Wives for their Brothers” (Field notes from in-depth family interview as part of the IA study)

After my interview with Agnes Mabel an ex-sfler in JSS 2 at Bakpaba JSS in the Nawumba district, I followed up to interview the parents. On my approach to their compound (in the company of Agnes), the parents were seated under a tree in front of the house. The parent burst into laughter when I told them I was bringing Agnes to ask for her hand in marriage (joking). After exchanging greetings, I asked for the family of Agnes for an in depth interview after telling them our mission. We went into the compound.

In the course of the interview, one of the striking changes in the family of Agnes’ participation in SFL was avoidance of the customary practice of exchanging girls for wives from one family for brothers in the family. As narrated by the mother, after Agnes completed SFL, she told me she wanted to continue her education into the final school system. I accepted. She then told me “mother I want to go to school to a very high level. So I don’t want you to ever ask or use me to exchange for a wife for any of my brothers”. I asked her why? Agnes this is our custom and your father is no more and your brothers are to support you so if you are not ready for this they may not also help you. She said she will help me to support her if her brothers will not help for that reason. She added that if we ever tried to use her that way “we would loose her”. I told the brothers, she told them the effects of the exchange including forceful marriage, collecting back wives when ever an exchange partner leaves the husband means one divorce results in two. Today in this family we would not abide by this cultural practice. This to me (one of the brothers who was around) is something we can never forget about Agnes and SFL.

Other impacts at the family level

SfL has helped families increasingly manage internal conflicts (within the families) as children have learnt to avoid taking sides when there is conflict between parents and siblings. As a result there was enhanced interpersonal relationships among the families. In-depth interviews revealed that families have found that their SfL children’s conduct

¹⁷ Drug abuse refers to the usage of prescription drugs without guidance from doctors or other medical practitioners.

reflected traditional socio-cultural values: they are more respectful, obedient, full of humility, hardworking, as well as demonstrating understanding and appreciation of the socio-cultural values of the community.

Interviews with the ex SfL families and communities revealed that there was a higher level of literacy among families and communities who had participated in the SfL programme. Most families had some functionally literate children who helped them with their livelihood activities, especially in reading and writing letters and in their trading and other business activities. They also helped them write names and or take minutes of meetings of members of social and economic associations. Families interviewed confirmed that even SfLers who could not integrate into the formal school systems were still able to support their parents in their livelihood activities.

Educational and Occupational outcomes across different families

Families across the three study districts indicated that they have children that have become functionally literate which broadened opportunities to pursue further education and facilitate their educational development. Families had benefited from a reduction in time and cost of educating their children through the 9 month cycle of SfL and integration of the child at the upper primary level. Access to education by their children has increased and they now enrol their children in the formal school system. The IA team also found the parents now appreciated the importance of their children becoming literate and the consequent advantages.

There are high literacy rates in families and communities. Over 125 children who would have had nothing to do with education have become functionally literate. Out of this, over 90 have continued to primary, JSS, SSS and tertiary level. – Adam Beneti, Facilitator, Gbungbaliga

Families interviewed indicated that they are able to retain their children in school due to the avoidance of early marriages, teenage pregnancy, child betrothal, child exchange and other socio-cultural practices that inhibit education of the children, especially the girl child. The children have acquired social skills which help the families earn a living and address the educational needs of the children. Most importantly were the higher aspirations and determination of the children and expectation of the family that their child would succeed.

Socio-Cultural Shift

Owing to the high level of awareness among families concerning the importance of education and the dangers of early marriage, teenage pregnancy, kayayo, other socio-cultural practices had been reduced in the communities visited. This in turn had led to higher levels of retention in the formal schools, particularly among girls, at upper primary and JSS. According to the GES and teachers in the Primary, JSS and SSS levels, people in the SfL communities are now able to analyse socio-cultural and political issues more logically. They are able to identify political propaganda more readily and this has helped them to manage conflict situations in families and communities.

The IA team also found that there is a high level of female empowerment across families in the three study districts. Most of the female SfLers and women in the communities were vocal and confident during the focus group discussions, in-depth interviews with SfLers, and with families of SfLers and non-SfLers. Some of the men did not know much about their children's educational development and impact of the SfL on their children and had to rely on their wives to share their perspectives. The women seemed more concerned and more willing to take extra steps in supporting the educational development of the children as compared to the men. In most cases it was the women (wives and grandmothers) who had adopted subtle strategies to persuade the men to allow their children to further their education and to allow the girl child to progress in education before fulfilling "exchange" or "betrothal" contractual arrangements.

5.3 Impact at the community level

Findings from the IA mini study and tracer study suggest that there has been a high degree of impact at the community level related to:

- Creating awareness towards the importance of education, specifically girl child education
- Improving the communities ability to "demand their rights and needs" from the District Assemblies and link with other service providers
- Improving the communities' ability to solicit support from District Assemblies and other NGOs and civil society actors in relation to education and social infrastructure
- Attitudinal change in terms of personal and communal hygiene
- Communities have continued to build social development structures such as schools, bore holes and latrines
- Ex facilitators are now volunteers in the community for other service activities such as electoral commission work, and guinea worm eradication
- Creating a group of literates within the community who can assist members read letters and other important instructions
- Heightened levels of community harmony and integration

Focal group interviews at the community level revealed that the nine communities across the three districts were better able to articulate their needs and demand for their rights from the Districts for good quality education, more teachers, more books etc. Several communities had attempted to put up their own school structures and hire teachers in order to ensure that their children could go to school. Ripple effects in other areas of social development included communities organizing themselves to improve access to drinking water and sanitation facilities with the construction of bore holes and toilets. Chirifoyili, Bacheborido and Sakpegu communities in the Yendi District all engaged in these types of social development activities after SfL had closed its programme.

The IA revealed that sustained impact at the community level has been felt in the areas of knowledge and awareness of sanitation and health practices and the importance of education. What has not always been sustained at community level is the ability of

parents to continue sending all their children to school. The mini study revealed that in five of the old SfL communities, there was a new crop of out of school children. Five out of twelve communities visited had an out of school population of 50 to 600 children between the ages of 6-14. Field work in these communities suggests that unless the parents are willing to take measures to reduce the family size and improve farming practices there would be a growing pool of out of school children a few years after SfL completed its 2-3 cycles in the community. Another factor which creates a growing level of out of school children is the lack of access and availability of school structures in the community or nearby. In only one out of 12 ex SfL communities visited was the community found unreceptive to change and despite all efforts by SfL there remained a growing out of school population.

Empowering the SfL community and committee members to become active agents of change in their communities was another key impact. Several community focal group discussions across IA communities revealed that the majority of SfL committee members had been key actors in their School Management Committees and the Parent Teacher Associations. Women were also becoming more involved in community affairs due to their new found confidence as active members of society.

One of the most important areas of impact revealed during the IA tracer study was the social development role of the SfL facilitator. The majority of facilitator's interviewed at the community level who were still resident in their communities (16 facilitators across the 9 communities) demonstrated a high degree of commitment to the development activities in their communities. Communities continued to use the ex facilitators during important community development activities. For instance, in at least 5 out of the 9 communities visited, facilitators were acting as Guinea Worm volunteers, engaged as volunteer teachers and/or assisting the communities improve some aspect of their non formal education work¹⁸.

5.4 Societal impact

How parents are coping with labor demands on the farm after sending children to school:

Snr. Bugri is at Gmanicheli, in Gusheigu District was interviewed by the IA team. He is about 50 years old and without a wife. He has six children and four are in school. Two attended the SFL program and later integrated into formal school. Mr Bugri said that he decided that “the children should go to school and he will reduce the farm size to enable him to work alone on it (the farm)”. Mr. Bugri told the IA team that he took the decision to reduce his farm size because he has seen that his children are intelligent and he is sure that they will reach higher levels of education especially the first born.

Mr. Bugri told us that he listened to his eldest son on spacing his crops and so when he practiced it, he had good yields so he realized that he could reduce his farm and still get enough to feed the family. He said “I told my eldest son that he has to work harder and be prepared to sacrifice at times to enable them stay in school and he is happy that his children have listened to him.

¹⁸ The final IA will contain a full section on the impact the SfL programme had on the facilitators.

Key findings from the SfL IA tracer study suggest that SfL has made a significant impact in reversing two social and economic trends which prevented children from accessing and remaining in the formal education system in northern Ghana. These two trends are:

- Poverty related behaviour among the rural poor in northern Ghana which often creates a vicious cycle of endemic poverty and the inability of parents to break their children out of the cycle (large family size and demands on child labour due to large farming size).
- A rethinking of culture, a change of behaviour and attitude towards girls' education and in some cases a change in the socio-cultural practices which prevent girls from access and retention in the formal education system.

5.5 Keys to SfLs Success

“In the formal school when they teach you something and you don't understand you find it difficult to ask questions because you fear the teacher and you think that the others may laugh at you, but it is not so in SfL. You were free to ask questions. The books were there. We used the mother tongue and the method of teaching was participatory. In SfL, vowels and consonants were used to help to form words and to read and write, but in the formal school they just force you to combine the words anyhow. - Seidu Anass, SSS 2 Arts, Welensi Secondary School, Nanumba South District.”

The keys to success of the SfL approach revealed in several interactions with critical stakeholders at various levels of the education system are summarized in the following section. District Directors of Education and District Assembly staff across the three IA focal districts shared their perspectives on the factors that contributed to the success of the SfL programme at the district level. Prominent among them were:

- Availability of teaching and learning materials, with each child having a set of books which they can take home. Free text books, pencils and other teaching and learning materials were supplied to the children and this eased the financial burden on the parents/guardian;
- Flexible school hours that allow children to support the parents/family during the day and attend SfL classes in the evening;
- Resident facilitators that ensured longer contact hours;
- Understanding and appreciation by the facilitator of the special socio-economic and cultural background of the children;
- Non-insistent on and no prescribed uniform;
- Ownership and commitment by families and communities resulting from the intense sensitization and capacity building workshops;
- Relevance and appropriateness of the curriculum based on the socio-cultural environment of the communities – language, culture, values and norms, economic, political, health, etc;
- Commitment of the SfLer and commitment of the facilitators;
- Self governance - establishment of SfL committees and their functioning; and

- Cooperation by traditional authorities who are the entry points and first point of call for SfL interventions at the community level.

Another key finding was that the SfL programme was appealing and effective in the communities due to the flexible school hours and high quality delivery.

Interviews with the ex SfLers and their families, like those of the District Directors of Education and District Assembly staff, indicated that the key factors that contributed to the success of the programme at the family and community level included:

- The self governance approach through the establishment and functioning of the SfL committees and the intense sensitization and capacity building activities of the SfL programme which elicited ownership and commitment by families;
- The flexible school hours allowed the children to support their parents/family during the day and attend SfL classes in the evening;
- The relevance and appropriateness of the curriculum which sustained the interest of the learners and their families' members. The curriculum was based on the socio-cultural environment of the families in terms of language, culture, values and norms, economic, political, health and environmental needs of the family;
- The free reading books, pencils and other teaching and learning materials relieved the parents of the burden of providing these requirements. Most parents could not have afforded this, but the absence of direct financial commitment motivated them to enrol their children in the SfL;
- The resident facilitator ensured that the SfLers and their families related to someone from the same socio-cultural background that understood and appreciated the socio-cultural context within which they operated. It also ensured commitment of the facilitator and longer contact hours with the learners;
- The non-insistent on or use of prescribed uniform also relieved the parents of financial burden and enabled the children to use any uniform of their choice without feeling intimidated by the uniforms of their colleagues;
- Commitment of the SfLers - the SfLers themselves were very committed as a result of the relevance and appropriateness of the curriculum and the child-friendly, committed and dedicated nature of the facilitator. The parents and children alike found the SfL learning environment very conducive leading to their sustained interest.

Analysis of the 77 in-depth interviews with ex SfLers and their families, suggest that several of the above factors together made the programme a success in helping children attain basic literacy, improve their self esteem and strengthen their cultural identity.

5.6 Unintended and Negative Impacts of the SfL Programme

One of the most important unintended impacts unearthed from this study was that SfL was improving the levels of literacy in the communities it is working. Clearly, parents were aware that SfL was having results in relation to literacy since they could easily compare to the literacy competencies of their non-SfL children and peers. The high quality of the programme (e.g. availability of teaching and learning materials and commitment of the facilitator) along with the abilities of the SfLers to read and write was

a concrete outcome of the programme for parents who were expecting to see the same results from the formal education system. The programme is demonstrating to parents that with concentrated effort literacy can be attained in the mother tongue in a short period. Some children who have not passed through the SfL programme may be attracted to the programme given the poor quality of teaching and learning currently being observed in many Ghanaian rural schools (Casely-Hayford, 2003). More work is needed to assist Government explore potential ways to improve the literacy instruction within the formal system, but SfL will also have to be prepared to face the reality that their programme may attract some children and parents who have experienced formal schooling but were not satisfied with the results.

The fact that SfL has assumed that they have reached all the out of school children after they complete a series of cycles in a community presents a challenge to the programme. Assumptions about the ability of parents to continue sending all their children in the face of endemic poverty and traditional subsistence farming practice has not been substantiated by this research. The IA mini study on Access confirmed that there is still a growing number of out of school children in communities which have been phased out of SfL. due predominately to poverty and child labour needs in sustaining large families.

6.0 The Potential for Mainstreaming and Replication of the SfL Model

The Ghana Government has increasingly shown interest and commitment to supporting complementary education due to the recognition it is obtaining within the International Community and Government circles as evidenced by their policy commitments. Several key policy documents by the Ghana Government attest to their interest and commitment to complementary education. On the International level several donor agencies have conducted studies on complementary education over the last five years most of whom have recognized the work of SfL¹⁹. The Director of SfL was invited to present the key achievements and lessons learned related to the SfL programme at a high level policy meeting conducted as part of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) conference in 2006. At this meeting Ministers from around Africa were invited to listen to innovative work being carried out across the continent. The Ghana Government sent a delegation including the Chief Director of the Ministry of Education to the conference. Most recently SfL was asked to present key findings and achievements to the Foreign Affairs Committee, an important Think Tank which advises the US Government on development policy in Sub Saharan Africa (SSA).

The Ghana Government has committed itself to supporting complementary education programmes in its Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS), and the Annual Education Sector Operational Plan (2005-2007) where it states it will “develop a complementary /alternative education programme which includes a system of re-entry into formal schooling as a means of recapturing some of the drop outs (GPRS strategy)”. The Ministry realizes that more support should be given to initiatives which are under way to

¹⁹ DfID and USAID have supported research into non state educational provision in the areas of complementary education. The EQUIP 2 Project has made School for Life a focal case study for work they are conducting on “Achieving EFA: Quality Basic Education for Underserved Children.”

capture these hard to reach groups (P.17)” The GPRS 2003-2005 also states that “ Access to basic education will be supported by early childhood development and alternative education for children out of school, with emphasis on the hard to reach areas of northern Ghana.... (GPRS, P.99.)”

The Ministry of Education’s Education Strategic Plan (ESP) Steering Committee has asked the Deputy Director of Basic Education Division to lead efforts in developing a policy programme for complementary basic education in Ghana. As part of the MOESS work on complementary education, a review team was sent to northern Ghana in June, 2006 to study the SfL model. The same team participated in the SfL replication workshop. The findings from the MOESS report on Complementary Education suggest that GER increased in 2004 by 2.4% due to the interventions of SfL. GER for formal schools in 2004 was at 71.9% but with SfL enrolments rose to 74.3% as a result of SfL interventions. The report also emphasizes the good practices of SfL which include: small class sizes, use of local language as the medium of instruction, primers written in the local language and emphasis on literacy, numeracy and life skills. Other comparisons in the report between the formal school system and the SfL programme relate to the internal efficiency of SfL, its cost effectiveness and high completion rates among learners (see Annex 6 for a summary). The MOESS report on complimentary education recommends that: “complementary education (CE) should be made part of the school system; the Ministry should establish units to coordinate activities of CE schools, develop a policy framework and support complementary education with the capitation grant (MOESS Report on Complementary Education, 2006)²⁰”.

6.1 Potential for Mainstreaming the SfL Model

At national level the Ministry of Education, Ghana Education Service and other Ministries directly involved in implementing the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy--GPRS (e.g. National Development Planning Commission, Ministry of Finance) are becoming increasingly aware that complementary education (CE) is probably the only approach left to closing the gross and net enrolment gaps particularly in the most deprived areas of the country.²¹ In 2006, the Basic Education Division of the Ministry of Education was tasked with the responsibility of developing a complementary education policy framework by March 2007, and “develop a curriculum for CE by August 2007”. Although the Ministry has articulated within its ESP the desire to set up a Complementary Education programme, in-depth interviews reveal that they do not see themselves as the “implementers” of this type of programme and have stated that they “simply want to play a role in setting up the policy framework in which others will implement their CE programmes.” (Senior Ministry of Education Official at the SfL Replication Workshop, January, 2007)

²⁰ The Capitation Grant is a subsidy paid to the District Education for each child enrolled in order to waive all school fees including cultural and sports fees. The Capitation grant is currently 30,000 cedis per child.

²¹ Several studies over the last 10 years suggest that the remaining 10-15% of children out of school in the country can most effectively be reached through complementary education (Education Sector Review, 2002; CARE/USAID, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2005). The Ministry of Education has ranked the 58 of the most deprived districts using ranking criteria. All of the northern districts are among the most deprived and several districts fall within the first 30 most deprived district ranking.

The Ministry of Education has conducted an in-depth study of the SfL programme and EQUALL Complementary Programme (CEP) project as part of its ongoing efforts to develop a CEP policy framework for MOESS. The MOESS report on findings revealed that the SfL programme is more cost effective and efficient for retaining children in the formal system.

Interviews with Regional and District Education Directors across the Northern Region (Bole, Gushiegu, Tamale Regional Directorate) suggest the following:

- On a scale from one (not that successful) to three (very successful), Regional and District Directors of Education gave a medium rating of success if the SfL approach was mainstreamed into the Ghana Education Service (GES) system.
- The reasons why they gave this medium rating included: “the success level will be average because the Government already has more activities and programs for the formal sector than it can manage. The support therefore will be minimal.” The SfL experience in attempting to mainstream across two of the northern districts in 2002 was exactly that: minimal. The experience of SfL in mainstreaming the programme in Gushiegu Karaga and Yendi in 2002 revealed that the District Education Offices were not able to mainstream the SfL approach due to lack of financing, and not enough commitment and interest in rural education.

More promising approaches to mainstreaming are related to the fact that the Government recognized that it can benefit from the services of trained SfL facilitators particularly in schools which have severe teacher shortages. They can also learn from the SfL methodological approaches in the formal system in order to improve the effectiveness of early language instruction at P1 to P3 level. The Ministry of Education has set up a National Literacy Strategic Planning Committee headed by the Director General of the Ghana Education Service and supported by several heads of Departments across the Education Ministry. This “Literacy Think Tank” has been asked to review all relevant curriculum across the country in order to assist the MOESS develop a more effective literacy programme for children in the public sector particularly at primary level. SfL’s materials have been presented to the committee and have had a very positive review for use at the lower primary level (P1 to P3) (Hartwell and Bonner, 2006). It is likely that SfL will be asked by Government to assist in improving literacy instruction at lower primary level.

Therefore, the two mainstreaming activities which are showing results and have great potential for assisting the Ghana Government in future relate to mainstreaming SfL facilitators into the formal system as pupil teachers, and “community volunteer teachers” particularly given the current shortage of teachers in the public sector. A second arena for mainstreaming activity which District Education and Regional Education Officials emphasized was the ongoing training and support SfL is providing at the lower primary school level. The in-service training provided by SfL to train teachers in the SfL methodology in order to improve instruction practice for reading and writing in the mother tongue has proven very effective. “I will personally endorse the idea of the

methodology being integrated within the formal education system because the approach helps the child grasp the learning of both the L1 and L2 faster (District Education Director, Northern Region, SfL Replication Workshop).”

6.2 The Context and Experience of Replication of SfLs model

The context in which SfL can be replicated should be considered from three different levels: policy level, regional/district level and the NGO implementation level. The context for replication is still very fertile and needed in northern Ghana and many parts of the country. The IA, however, suggests that there may be limited numbers of replicators with current financial and technical capacity to carry this out. Given the Government’s new focus on developing a “policy/programme” for complementary education and the fact that many senior policy makers are coming to the realization that the final enrolment gaps in deprived rural poor areas of Ghana can only be addressed by Complementary Education (AESP, 2006, CARE, 2003), SfL is poised to make a significant contribution not only to the government and children of northern Ghana, but to assisting other West African and Sub Saharan countries develop their own systems of complementary education in order to meet the MDG’s of universal primary education and gender parity over the next five years. Two models of SfL replication have emerged over the last four years. These are explained in the following table:

	Experience with the current model	Lessons learned	Potential for future usage
Direct service delivery model	<p>SfL was asked by the Education Development Centre (EDC) to help implement a complementary education program under EQUALL using the SfL's approach which would reach 31,250 children in deprived rural areas in northern Ghana over a five year period.</p> <p>SfL set up the office, staff, developed all the curriculum, learners' materials and was directly responsible for the implementation of the program through its newly developed operational arm.</p>	<p>SfL model was compromised in some ways related to the quality and pace of delivery. The EQUALL project had some unrealistic targets which compromised the normal pace and level of quality which SfL normally used.</p> <p>The full control over the SfL approach, values and principles was somewhat compromised due to the stringent approach of the funders.</p>	<p>This is a potential model for future replication particularly if trying to achieve increasing levels of scale; with more stringent control over the implementation/operation and demands for implementation the model is very feasible for future replication.</p>
NGO replication model	<p>Two NGOs attempted to replicate the SfL model over the last three years. PAPADEV has been successful in replicating the SfL approach thanks to technical and financial support by IBIS and SfL in the Sawla District, Northern Region.</p> <p>Roots and Futures have developed a very strong proposal and plan for replication in 25 communities in the Upper East but were unable to secure financing for the program.</p>	<p>SfL should assist NGO's identify funding as part of the technical support they provide along with the replication package and training. Financing of NGOs will be a key to whether SfL replication is feasible among the NGO sector in Northern Ghana.</p> <p>NGO's which are selected to replicate the model should have some level of capacity to assist a number of communities in a particular district, experience in the education sector and commitment to rural education.</p> <p>NGOs that have been trained and are working to replicate the model in different areas should have a memorandum of understanding with SfL in order to ensure that the principles and values of the model are adhered to and sustained.</p>	<p>Limited potential for this model unless financing can be secured for a number of NGOs at one time in order to replicate the model on a district by district basis and in several districts at a time.</p> <p>NGO's are used to working on a very small scale; the SfL approach will provide educational NGO's the opportunity to expand in scale given the resourcing and technical assistance.</p> <p>SfL should play a key role in monitoring and building the capacity of these NGO's.</p>

Two models of replication appear feasible for SfL in the future: one is the branding model of replication whereby the NGOs selected are encouraged to replicate and commit to the SfL core set of values and principles, sign memorandums of understanding, be trained and monitored over the period of time and commit to working in a particular district for at least five years.

The second model, which appears more feasible, is the direct service delivery model which involves SfL setting up the mechanism for large scale roll out of the programme, ensuring quality control and standard but hiring a larger set of staff that would be responsible for overall implementation. Although the EQUALL project (bilaterally funded through EDC) has proven difficult to “control” the model has taught many lessons and appears the most feasible way to reach large numbers of children in future.

The EQUALL programme will stop operations in September 2007 leaving SfL with several districts in Northern, Upper East and Upper West having only completed one or two cycles of its programme. SfL will need support to ensure standards of quality are maintained by either securing financing within Ghana or abroad to fully complete the work in these districts. The districts include: Bongo, Talensi Nabdam and Bawku West in the Upper East Region; Lawra, Jirapa Lambrussie and Nadowli Districts in the Upper West and East Mamprussie, West Gonja and Bole in the Northern Region.²²

Lessons learned from the SfL Replication workshop and Phase 3 suggest that there is a need to conduct a full capacity assessment with members of the NNED and GNECC network in order to identify the numbers of NGOs across the Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions of Ghana who have the capacity or could potentially replicate the model. Three NGO’s have been identified in the Upper East, Northern and Eastern Regions of Ghana who meet the criteria for selection, however, a more in-depth exercise is needed. Interviews with NNED and members of SfL suggest that there are NGO’s across the three northern regions, Volta and Eastern Regions that could replicate but would need secured financing and capacity building to do this. The final IA will list some of the potential NGOs replicators in northern Ghana.

6.3 Potential replicators of the SfL Model

Interviews with Regional and District Directors of Education during the IA process indicated that the most effective potential replicators of SfL’s model include: NGO’s, Religious bodies, and Faith based organizations. Findings from the replication workshop suggest that replicators of the SfL model should have the following characteristics:

- Be in a learning mode: willing to learn and be guided by the principles and values of the SfL programme means not only “adapting the model” but ensuring that it is implemented to the highest standard with little compromise on quality.

²² SfL is actually working in 12 districts since the re-demarcation of two more districts from two existing districts (Nanumba and Gusheigu Karaga). For the purpose of the IA we have left these numbers to reflect the old district demarcation.

- Have the capacity to implement the SfL model over time on a large scale of at least 20-25 communities at a time and systematically assisting all the needy communities in a given district in order to reach scale.
- Willingness to develop the necessary technical expertise in material development, quality control, training and literacy instruction.
- An interest and commitment to improving rural educational outcomes for children in Ghana.

Approximately 64 NGOs are registered with the Northern Network for Education and Development (NNED, 2007) and are operational across the three northern regions of Ghana. Preliminary interviews with NNED using the selection criteria above indicate that there may be only 10-15 NGOs who will meet the criteria described above²³. Already SfL is liaising with, working with, or has been approached, by the following NGOs who are interested and willing to replicate the model in three of the most deprived districts of Ghana. These are:

- Afram Plains Development Organisation, operating in the Eastern Region of Ghana; and
- Roots and Futures, operating in the Kassena Nankana District of the Upper East.

Table 4: Potential Replicators of School for Life

NGO	Learning mode	Capacity	Willingness	Interest/com	Total
RAINS CAMFED, TAMALE	1	1	2	1	5
SEND FOUNDATION, TAMALE	1	1	2	1	5
CALID, TAMALE	2	3	2	1	8
AGREDS, TAMALE	2	4	2	2	10
YARO, TAMALE	2	4	2	2	10
TIDA, TAMALE	1	3	3	1	8
TUMA KAVI, TAMALE	1	1	2	1	5
CEDEP, WA	2	3	2	1	8
PAWLA, TUMU UW/R	1	3	2	1	7
PRONET, WA	1	2	2	1	6
SIDEC, WA	1	4	2	1	8
CENSUDI, BOLGA	1	1	2	1	5
ISODEC, TAMALE	1	1	1	1	4

Scale: 1 5
 low high

Criteria

- Be in a learning mode
- Capacity to implement the SfL model
- Willingness to develop the necessary technical expertise
- An interest and commitment to improving rural educational outcome for children in Ghana.

²³ We are still assessing the capacities of some of these NGO's.

Some of the above NGO's are medium sized NGO's and are capable of district wide replication but require the technical support, financing and long term commitment to carry out this type of replication work in collaboration with SfL²⁴.

6.4 Key challenges and opportunities to replication and mainstreaming

The key challenge to ongoing mainstreaming of the SfL model within the current Ghana Education sector is the degree to which the language policy and instructional practices within the Ghana Education Service adhere to international best practice in literacy. Currently, the Government White Paper does not make any definitive statement concerning which medium of instruction should be used at lower primary level but does recognize that local language instruction is one of the most effective approaches. This unfortunately does not give teachers, nor district education officials clear enough guidelines.

The second major challenge in mainstreaming the SfL model will continue to be the governments "fatigue in implementing programmes outside the mainstream business of education." The District Directors of Education across the north were well aware that a "saturation point is being reached in relation to the number of new approaches to literacy brought into the GES system". Currently the SfL model has been endorsed by the central government (MOESS) and regional levels of government (regional education offices) for implementation in the basic school system. SfL should continue to ensure that it provides as much information as possible concerning its curriculum and instructional approaches to these agencies and levels. Other challenges to replication mentioned in interviews with the District Directors across the three focal IA districts included: financial constraints with regard to uptake, and lack of interest by some stakeholders including some DDE's and District Assemblies.

The main opportunity within the next five years is the chance for SfL to showcase its achievements and impact in light of the fact that public education is failing children in many parts of Ghana. International donors and Governments working in collaboration with the Ghana Government are becoming increasingly aware that the SfL model may be the most effective way to bring about literacy among large out of school populations. Education research in Sub Saharan Africa is also pointing to the fact that SfL's methodology may also be the most effective way to ensure literacy attainment among the vast majority of children in school who fail to become literate, those who are dropping out of school and those who will never complete basic education.

²⁴ PAPADEV, operating in the Sawla Kalba district of Northern Region.

6.0 Key Recommendations and Conclusions

The findings from the IA study suggest that not only has SfL had an impact on improving access and retention of children across the 10 districts of intervention in northern Ghana, it has also had a tremendous impact on improving the levels of educational attainment and achievement among ex SfLers within the formal school system. Several approaches to literacy testing and pupil achievement during the IA demonstrated that the SfLers were outperforming their non SfL counterparts in the formal education system particularly in the core subject areas such as Ghanaian Language, English and Maths²⁵. SfLers were also being asked to take on student leadership positions across the districts and were seen as role models due to their values and determination to achieve. SfLers have become a force within northern Ghana which demonstrates that educational transformation and human development can help children and families break out of the cycle of poverty.

The SfL programme has been operating in 10 of the 18 districts in the Northern Region over the last twelve years. Data on out of school children across the three northern regions suggests that over 226,000 children between the ages of 6-14 are out of school in the Northern Region with over 100,000 in the Upper East and Upper West Regions. These children will most likely remain out of school unless programmes such as SfL continue to operate and achieve scale. The IA study indicates that given the current dropout rates, non completion and poor literacy attainment among children in the formal system, there is a growing need for SfL to continue to assist large numbers of out of school children and should consider working with the growing numbers of non-completers from the formal system who have not been able to attain basic literacy skills. A new programme which would add one more year to the current SfL programme was recommended during the Replication Workshop (Jan. 2007) with key Government stakeholders in order to consolidate existing literacy skills and ensure attainment of higher levels of cognitive and life skills development.

One of the main impacts of the SfL programme was that it was helping parents cope with the cost (direct and indirect) of sending their children to school. The SfL programme shortens the number of years spent at the Basic School level for learners, and ensures that the majority attain basic literacy before entering the formal system. Findings from the IA suggest that SfL children are able to cope in environments which lack teachers, books and regular instructional practice when compared to their non SfL peers on entering the formal education system; SfLers have been given a “head start” to literacy and are able to use the methods they learned in sounding out words to easily transition to the second language and remain focussed in classroom environment which lack resourcing. The current performance of children at P6 level across Ghana suggest that less than 25% are able to attain literacy after six years of schooling. These results are much worse for

²⁵ The IA literacy tests revealed that SfLers were performing the same as non SfLers in the English fluency tests at P6 and JSS3. Several other instruments used to track performance of Sflers along with in-depth interview of their teachers, district education officers and colleague non Sflers reveal that they are out performing non Sflers in the core subject areas.

children in rural poor areas of Ghana.²⁶ Accelerated literacy approaches outside the formal system may be Ghana's only hope of helping children, particularly in rural deprived areas attain literacy and survive the public education system.

The cost saving of this programme should also be considered by Government as they attempt to attain Universal Basic Education by 2015. For instance, the unit cost per SfL learners is USD 16.57 compared to USD 70.8 per child in the public primary system in northern Ghana. The SfL programme has saved the Government of Ghana over USD \$6,023,168 by educating over 85,073 children through its programme. Considering that these children would have spent three years in the primary school system if it were not for the SfL programme--- the Government of Ghana (GoG) has saved a total USD \$18,069,504 over this three year period (See Annex 13.0 for details in costing).

The IA findings suggest that Government should seriously consider using the accelerated SfL model to reduce cost of primary education particularly in deprived rural areas where teacher and learning materials are not available nor adequate. The Government should also consider, based on its current performance results among primary school holders, that the approach may also "break children through to literacy" in a more effective manner. This would mean that a wider complementary education programme should be considered for all rural areas of Ghana and particularly those in deprived poverty pockets.

Key Recommendations

The following are the key recommendations which emerged from the IA study and are based on the views of several stakeholder groups including the families and beneficiaries of the SfL programme:

Growth and Scale of the Programme

- The SfL programme should continue to grow and maintain quality in order to consolidate and build on the achievements of the programme over the last 12 years. The programme should remain focused on ensuring that it reaches the out of school populations in old and new communities. It is suggested that a target of 100,000 be considered by Development Partners for Phase 4 financing; focus on the Northern Region should be maintained (with a proportion in the Upper East and Upper West where the EQUALL project will phase out in 2008).
- The findings of the IA suggest that SfL should take systematic steps to present the findings of its work to the highest levels of Government to demonstrate the cost effectiveness in providing a more accelerated and adaptable approach to literacy attainment among out of school populations in northern Ghana.

²⁶ (see National Education Assessment (NEA, 2006) Report and RECOUP working paper by Dr Etse, Associates for Change, 2007)

Advocacy and Public Awareness Work

- Advocacy and research work should continue within SfL in order to ensure that the Government and other interested organizations are able to understand the key impacts of SfL and ensure that their commitments to Universal Primary and Gender Parity are attained (i.e. MDG's, UPE, GPRS and ESP).
- SfL needs to produce a documentary on its activities as part of its sensitisation programme.
- SfL should play an advocacy role to link other organisations with support for income generation activities to support families of SfLers to educate their children. SfL needs to explore the possibility of collaborating with other to support women who are facing financial difficulties in supporting their children's education.

Non SfLers interviewed and attending the same class as the SfL integrants recommended that "SfL should add documentaries to their sensitization efforts. They stressed that SfL should be advertised on TV, in news papers and radio for many people to get to know of their good works."

Operational Recommendations

Due to large family sizes, endemic poverty and food insecurity in northern Ghana, SfL should consider staying in communities when they have exhausted the out of school population. SfL should consider more sustainable community based approaches to assisting communities continue the programme with minimum intervention after the average 3 year cycle is completed. It should use the strength of local SfL committees and other CBOs to assist with ensuring access and literacy outcomes are sustained. The Ministry of Education's capitation grant funding should also be explored.

- SfL should consider more innovative approaches to supporting facilitators who have completed serving the programme for a minimum of two years transition to the world of work. Counselling and job placement programmes should be part of the process of helping facilitators as well as increasing their stipends given the lack of community support in this regard.
- SfL should develop a second level (one year additional literacy programme) in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education in order to improve the transition skills of children to the broader world of work and ensure that SfL graduates are better prepared if they do not integrate into the formal system of education. This model would also benefit the large numbers of children who dropout or do not complete basic education and remain illiterate particularly in very hard to reach areas.
- SfL should develop a more strategic approach to reaching potential replicators through existing educational networks such as NNED and GNECC particularly in the Upper East and Upper West Regions, and across the 58 most deprived districts in Ghana who are interested and capable of using complementary education.

The American Ambassadors' Girls Education Scheme has been an important complement and should be sustained and expanded to cover all needy but brilliant girls. This is necessary both at the JSS and SSS levels. The possibility of extending the scheme to non SfLers needs to be explored. Non SfLers may be tempted to find ways of getting into the SfL and may result in parents who are capable of sending their children to formal schools resorting to sending their children to SfL.

Target Population and Curriculum

- The target population for SfL should continue to focus on children who have never been to school and are between the ages of 8-14. However the programme should also be more aware that they may be attracting children who have dropped out of school who were previously attending the formal system. These children should also be considered for the SfL programme since literacy attainment in a short period (nine months) may be one of the ways to reintegrate them back into the formal system and assist them attain basic literacy.
- SfL should explore the possibility of linking non integrants to vocational training options in order to cater for the needs of those that are not academically inclined. They should also reintroduce more skills-based work in their programming to reinforce skills based education within their programme.

Families and communities suggested that the programme should be extended from nine to twelve months. They also recommended that SfL should come back to the communities since they are still in need of the programme and that there should maintain a stronger linkage with the community once they pull out.

Monitoring and Evaluation

A review of the monitoring and evaluation arrangements currently in place reveal that the outcomes could be optimised if the database is strengthened, and linkage and coordination arrangements are put in place to assure efficiency and effectiveness. To address this, SfL needs to establish a database that is linked to tracking data supplied by the formal schools at the primary, JSS and SSS levels so that it could be updated on a regular basis. There is need to establish linkage arrangements between SfLers and various offices of SfL to facilitate updates of the database. Tracer studies could be added as part of the schedules for field staff, who should be given additional resources to enable them to undertake effective follow up. More staff needed to be assigned solely for tracer and M&E purposes. Field staff also should be trained in the conduct of tracer studies - data collection, storage and retrieval to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

Replication

The International and National goals of ensuring that a growing number of out of school children and dropouts from the formal education system are given the opportunity to attain basic literacy skills will require that SfL continues to be supported to implement its main programme of work with a smaller proportion of support for the NGO replication

model. SfL should also continue to focus on government mainstreaming opportunities by continuing to train teachers at the lower primary levels using their methodology and linking ex SfL Facilitators to the District Education Directorates as potential pupil teachers. The future for assisting large numbers of out of school children attain basic literacy levels in Northern Ghana will depend on programmes like SfL continuing to be involved in direct service delivery. SfL should continue to have at least 80% of its resourcing focused on main service delivery activities and 20% of financing and support to potential NGO replicators which have secured financing.

Since 2004 SfL has worked in collaboration with the Education Development Centre (EDC) on the USAID supported EQUALL project. The final phase of the EQUALL project will not ensure that an entire district is covered by the SfL programme before phasing out. The IA replication workshop revealed that the values and principles of SfL should not be compromised to accommodate the scale of any project or funder. It is highly recommend that Phase 4 assist the SfL programme continue to ensure that the normal expansion and consolidation cycles of project implementation started by the EQUALL project in the Upper East: Bawku West, Bongo, Talensi Nabdam; Upper West: Jirapa Lambrussie, Lawra and Nadowli; and Northern Region: Central Gonja, West Gonja and East Mamprusi, be completed in the coming phase²⁷.

Conclusions

Development projects around the world often attain short term and medium term developmental results. This impact study revealed that the SfL programme was touching the roots of the problem of endemic poverty and challenging communities to rethink traditional socio cultural patterns of operation. The programme was of high quality, systematic in nature and contained the key elements to ensuring literacy attainment within the focus population. This had far reaching results in relation to the attitudinal and behaviour shifts needed to address the core problems of educational access, retention and poverty reduction in northern Ghana.

The impact assessment revealed that there was a ripple effect of the SfL programme in several dimensions of the child's life (social, cognitive and affective) which impacts on the child to the family and onto the community and school. This ripple effect was based on the accelerated break through to literacy experienced by the SfL learner during the nine month SfL cycle and was then transferred to the family through the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours which were introduced and embedded in the curriculum.

SfL children were learning the value of being a Ghanaian, the value of rural life, farming and becoming aware of the dangers of malaria, large family sizes, and unsafe water. They were also becoming aware, through the SfL classes, that people should be treated equally whether a boy or a girl or whether from a different ethnic grouping and this was being translated into changing practices of the family and communal way of life. Children, families and communities involved in SfL were beginning to appreciate new

²⁷ Most of these districts will have had only one or two cycles of SfL intervention when donor funding stops.

ways of thinking about the world and people around them translating this into more appreciation of gender differences, equality and ethnic diversity. They were becoming conscious of the different roles played by girls and boys in a social context which awarded conformity and restricted change.

At national, district and school levels the level of scale was also having positive impact on the access targets set by Government to achieving Universal Primary Education and basic literacy, gender parity and quality of education. Studies by the Government themselves suggested that SfL was contributing significantly to the increase in Gross and Net Enrolment Rates, particularly in the Northern Region of Ghana. In terms of gender parity, retention and completion rates among girls, the SfL programme was having a positive impact on the number of girls remaining in school and transitioning to the higher levels of education (JSS and SSS). Ex SfL girls were making up a large percentage of the classrooms at the JSS and SSS levels, particularly when considering the rural characteristics of school intake.

The greatest impact of the SfL programme on the community and family was in relation to people's new found awareness concerning the importance of education, particularly "good quality education." SfL was demonstrating that poor rural communities across the Northern Region could educate their children who were not able to go to school due to the constraints on farming and sustaining large families in a context of rural subsistence agriculture which depended on children to assist on the farm. SfL gave a chance to children for a life change which involved breaking through to literacy, strengthening their identity and empowering them to become "a someone." Parents and people in the community (e.g. "aunties") who had not been able to send all their children to school were using this flexible school system to assist their children to learn. Children who would not have had a chance to transition to the formal system were paying their own way and working hard to demonstrate to their parents that they were worth the investment, particularly the girl child.

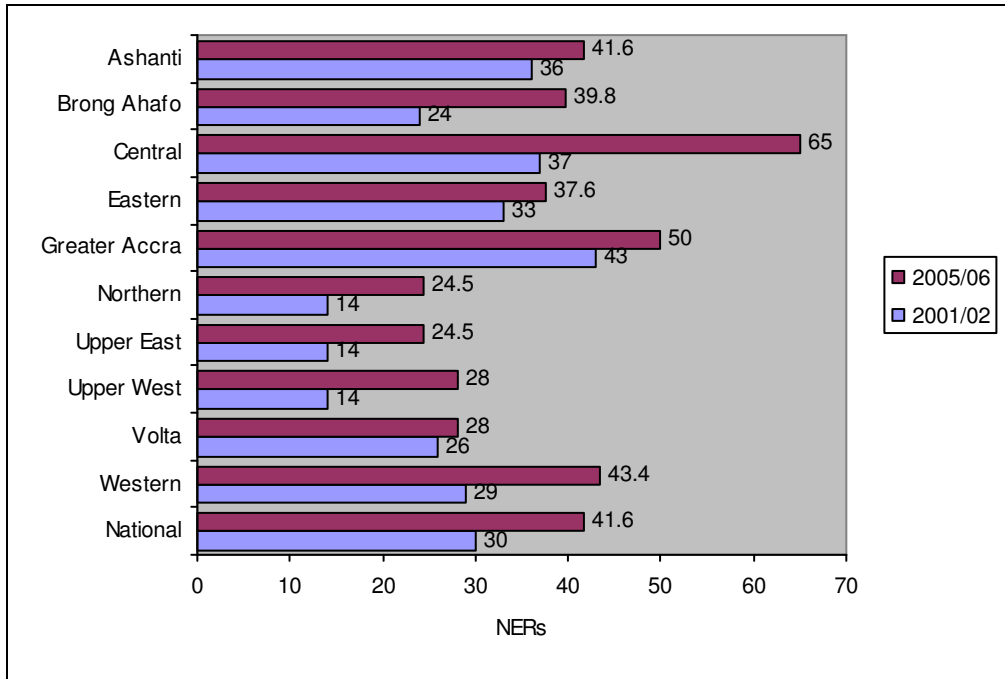
The success of SfL rested on a large population of dedicated rural youth who were taking up the role as SfL facilitators to assist the children in their communities have this life chance. The approach, dedication and commitment of the facilitators... and concern they had for their communities' children was the pivot around which all learning was based. The IA revealed that high quality education, high performance of children in relation to literacy attainment in SfL and their ability to remain in the public system was linked to the dedication of the facilitators. District Directors of Education, teachers and community leaders spoke of the selfless and sacrificial efforts of these volunteer facilitators. Other success factors included all of the elements working in harmony: the pedagogy, the language of instruction, methodology and curriculum as well as the flexible school timing.

The impact assessment reveals that good quality education which transforms children into literate and conscientious learners can be brought to rural families in endemic poverty zones in Ghana and across Africa when educational systems adjust to the context of learning and mobilise committed teachers. Given the degree of poverty, entrenched

subsistence farming patterns and ways of life of the people in northern Ghana ...modern public education may be accessible to some children but not all. The findings suggest that more cost effective and accelerated learning systems better adapted to the realities of farming and large family sizes can help children not only “break through to literacy” but provide them with a foundation which can help them transition into the formal system and move to higher levels of education. The programme can also provide the chance for children who will continue to remain out of the formal system with a chance at life by providing them with the literacy skills, self esteem and identity needed to become confident and critical youth in carrying out and transforming traditional ways of life in rural Ghana.

Selected Annexes

Annex 1.0: Net Enrolment Ratios at JSS Level by Region, 2001 vs. 2005



(Source: MOESS 2006)

Annex 3.0: Summary across 10 SfL Districts: Enrolment, Drop Out, Graduation and Integration (1995/96 to 2005/06)

Year	No. of Classes	Total Enrolment in SfL Classes	No. Enrolled (by Gender)		Total No of Dropouts in SfL Classes	No. of Dropouts (by Gender)		Total No. Graduated from SfL Classes	No. Graduated (by Gender)		Total Integrated in formal system	No. Integrated (by Gender)	
			M	F		M	F		M	F		M	F
		TOT	M	F	TOT	M	F	TOT	M	F	TOT	M	F
1995/96	100	2,480	1,358	1,122	213	90	123	2,267	1,268	999	1,041	625	416
1996/97	100	2,431	1,412	1,019	170	57	113	2,261	1,355	906	1,075	669	406
1997/98	220	5,454	3,190	2,264	489	225	264	4,965	2,965	2,000	2,533	1,567	966
1998/99	250	6,143	3,568	2,575	573	330	243	5,570	3,238	2,332	2,882	1,717	1,165
1999/00	400	9,814	5,442	4,372	1,030	408	622	8,784	5,034	3,750	5,434	3,127	2,307
2000/01	400	9,925	6,080	3,845	964	503	461	8,961	5,577	3,384	6,291	3,833	2,458
2001/02	386	9,728	5,811	3,917	839	427	412	8,889	5,384	3,505	6,417	3,765	2,652
2002/03	361	9,102	5,480	3,622	525	250	275	8,577	5,230	3,347	7,079	4,259	2,820
2003/04	360	8,934	5,380	3,554	296	150	146	8,638	5,230	3,408	5,997	3,584	2,413
2004/05	440	10,959	6,372	4,587	373	178	195	10,586	6,194	4,392	8,596	5,052	3,544
2005/06	405	10,103	5,517	4,586	150	62	88	9,953	5,455	4,498	8,261	4,322	3,939
Total	3,422	85,073	49,610	35,463	5,622	2,680	2,942	79,451	46,930	32,521	55,606	32,520	23,086

**Annex 3.1: Percentage of Enrolment, Drop Out, Graduation and Integration
(1995/96 to 2005/06)**

Drop outs as percentage of Enrolment (by gender)		total drop out as % of total enrolment	Graduation as percentage of Enrolment (by Gender)		Total Graduates as % of enrolment	Integration as % of Enrolment (by Gender)		Total Integration as % of Enrolment	Integration as % of Graduation (by Gender)		Total Integration as % of Graduation	
Year	M	F	TOTAL	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
1995/96	3.63%	4.96%	8.59%	51.13%	40.28%	91.41%	25.20%	16.77%	41.98%	27.57%	18.35%	45.92%
1996/97	2.34%	4.65%	6.99%	55.74%	37.27%	93.01%	27.52%	16.70%	44.22%	29.59%	17.96%	47.55%
1997/98	4.13%	4.84%	8.97%	54.36%	36.67%	91.03%	28.73%	17.71%	46.44%	31.56%	19.46%	51.02%
1998/99	5.37%	3.96%	9.33%	52.71%	37.96%	90.67%	27.95%	18.96%	46.92%	30.83%	20.92%	51.74%
1999/00	4.16%	6.34%	10.50%	51.29%	38.21%	89.50%	31.86%	23.51%	55.37%	35.60%	26.26%	61.86%
2000/01	5.07%		9.71%	56.19%	34.10%	90.29%	38.62%	24.77%	63.39%	42.77%	27.43%	70.20%
2001/02	4.39%	4.24%	8.62%	55.35%	36.03%	91.38%	38.70%	27.26%	65.96%	42.36%	29.83%	72.19%
2002/03	2.75%	3.02%	5.77%	57.46%	36.77%	94.23%	46.79%	30.98%	77.77%	49.66%	32.88%	82.53%
2003/04	1.68%	1.63%	3.31%	58.54%	38.15%	96.69%	40.12%	27.01%	67.13%	41.49%	27.93%	69.43%
2004/05	1.62%	1.78%	3.40%	56.52%	40.08%	96.60%	46.10%	32.34%	78.44%	47.72%	33.48%	81.20%
2005/06	0.61%	0.87%	1.48%	53.99%	44.52%	98.52%	42.78%	38.99%	81.77%	43.42%	39.58%	83.00%
Totals	3.15%	3.46%	6.61%	55.16%	38.23%	93.39%	38.23%	27.14%	65.36%	40.93%	29.06%	69.99%

Annex 3.2: Number of Classes, Enrolment, Dropout, Graduation and Integration in the 10 districts (1995-2006).

District	Year	No of classes	Initial enrolment			No of drop out			Graduation			Integration		
			Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F
Gushegu Karaga	1995/6 – 2005/6	505	12,337	7,557	4,780	1,103	566	537	11,234	6,991	4,243	4,342	2,890	1,452
Yendi	1995/6 – 2005/6	467	11,853	6,893	4,960	670	330	340	11,183	6,563	4,620	8,660	5,166	3,494
Savelugu Nanton	1997/8 – 2005/6	395	9,727	5,133	4,594	770	340	430	8,957	4,793	4,164	6,702	3,640	3,062
Zabzugu Tatale	1997/8 – 2005/6	440	10,820	6,840	3,980	555	268	287	10,265	6,572	3,693	4,803	3,042	1,761
Tamale Rural	1997/8 – 2005/6	395	9,847	5,415	4,432	889	422	467	8,958	5,029	3,929	7,632	4,366	3,266
Nanumba	1999/00 – 2005/6	350	8,750	5,048	3,702	124	53	71	8,626	4,993	3,633	6,772	3,868	2,904
Saboba Chereponi	1999/00 – 2005/6	350	8,750	5,487	3,263	680	347	333	8,070	5,140	2,930	5,118	2,994	2,124
Tolon Kumbongu	1999/00 – 2005/6	340	8,494	4,698	3,796	579	227	352	7,915	4,471	3,444	7,707	4,376	3,331
East Gonja	2004/5 – 2005/6	80	1,999	1,113	886	155	84	71	1,844	1,020	824	1,519	828	691
West Mamprusi	2004/5 – 2005/6	100	2,496	1,426	1,070	97	43	54	2,399	1,383	1,016	2,351	1,350	1,001
Total	1995/6 – 2005/6	3,422	85,073	49,610	35,463	5,622	2,680	2,942	79,451	46,930	32,521	55,606	32,520	23,086

Annex 3.3: District Enrolment, Dropout, Graduation and Integration Rates

District	Year	Enrolment	%	Dropout	%	Graduation	%	Integration	%
Gushegu Karaga	1995/6 – 2005/6	12,337	14.5	1,103	8.94	11,234	91.06	4,342	35.20
Yendi	1995/6 – 2005/6	11,853	13.9	670	5.65	11,183	94.35	8,660	73.06
Savelugu Nanton	1997/8 – 2005/6	9,727	11.4	770	7.92	8,957	92.08	6,702	68.90
Zabzugu Tatale	1997/8 – 2005/6	10,820	12.7	555	5.13	10,265	94.87	4,803	44.39
Tamale Rural	1997/8 – 2005/6	9,847	11.6	889	9.02	8,958	90.97	7,632	77.51
Nanumba	1999/00 – 2005/6	8,750	10.3	124	1.42	8,626	98.58	6,772	77.39
Saboba Chereponi	1999/00 – 2005/6	8,750	10.3	680	7.77	8,070	92.23	5,118	58.49
Tolon Kumbongu	1999/00 – 2005/6	8,494	10.0	579	6.82	7,915	93.18	7,707	90.74
East Gonja	2004/5 – 2005/6	1,999	2.4	155	7.75	1,844	92.25	1,519	75.99
West Mamprusi	2004/5 – 2005/6	2,496	2.9	97	3.89	2,399	96.11	2,351	94.19
Total	1995/6 – 2005/6	85,073	100	5,622	6.61	79,451	93.39	55,606	65.36

Annex 4:0 Retention Rate for Sflers and Non Sflers

GUSHEIGU KARAGA DISTRICT - RETENTION IN THE FORMAL SYSTEM

Name of School	No of Sfls integrated in P3 (Sept 02)		Total No. in P3 in (Sept 02)		No. of Sfls continued to P4 (Sept 03)		Total No. of pupils in P4 in (Sept 03)		No. of Sfls continued to P5 (Sept 04)		Total no. of pupils in P5 in (Sept 04)		No. of Sfls continued to P6 in (Sept 05)		Total number of children in P6 as of (Sept 05)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Nawuhugu R/C Prim.	9	2	25	15	8	2	24	15	8	2	10	9	8	2	10	9
Katinbugli Primary Sch.	3	2	4	6	1	2	4	3	1	2	7	3	1	2	7	3
Gushegu L/A Primary Sch.	3	3	36	48	3	3	66	53	3	3	79	51	3	3	51	53
Marikazia E/A Primary Sch.	2	3	29	25	2	3	27	23	2	3	23	23	2	3	21	23
Watania E/A Primary Sch.	1	0	42	20	1	0	40	19	1	0	35	34	1	0	44	19

NANUMBA DISTRICT - RETENTION IN THE FORMAL SYSTEM

Name of School	No of Sfls integrated in P3 (Sept 02)		Total No. in P3 in (Sept 02)		No. of Sfls continued to P4 (Sept 03)		Total No. of pupils in P4 in (Sept 03)		No. of Sfls continued to P5 (Sept 04)		Total no. of pupils in P5 in (Sept 04)		No. of Sfls continued to P6 in (Sept 05)		Total number of children in P6 as of (Sept 05)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Makayili Prim. School.	3	6	15	11	3	6	14	11	3	6	14	11	3	6	14	11
Nakpaa Prim. School.	9	6	21	13	9	6	21	13	9	6	19	13	9	5	19	12
Mangoasi Prim. School.	6	4	11	17	6	4	11	17	5	4	10	16	5	4	10	16
Kpayansi Prim. School.	7	4	16	11	7	4	16	11	6	4	15	11	6	4	14	11
Tinageria Prim. School	8	5	19	11	8	5	19	11	6	5	17	11	6	5	17	11

Annex 5.0: Facilitators Trained Over the Last 10 years

Initial Training - Yendi District

YEAR	Number and Type of Training						Total for year (classes)	Number of Learners
	Initial Training			Refresher Training				
	M	F	T	M	F	T		
1997/98	9	0	9	41	0	41	50	1250
1998/99	21	0	21	29	0	29	50	1250
1999/2000	18	0	18	32	0	32	50	1250
2000/01	23	0	23	27	0	27	50	1250
2001/02	11	0	11	25	0	25	36	900
2002/03	11	0	11	15	0	15	26	650
2003/04	6	6	12	18	0	18	30	750
2004/05	12	3	15	18	7	25	40	1000
2005/06	10	2	12	17	6	23	35	875
2006/07	8	1	9	16	5	21	30	750
Totals	129	12	141	238	18	256	397	9925

Initial Training - Zabzugu/Tatale District

YEAR	Number and Type Of Training						Total for year (classes)	Remarks
	Initial Training			Refresher Training				
	M	F	T	M	F	T		
1995/96	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
1996/97	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
1997/98	49	1	50	0	0	0	50	
1998/99	0	0	0	49	1	50	50	
1999/2000	4	0	4	45	1	46	50	
2000/01	0	0	0	47	3	50	50	
2001/02	14	0	14	33	3	36	50	
2002/03	7	1	8	40	2	42	50	
2003/04	9	5	14	33	3	36	50	
2004/05	4	0	4	37	9	46	50	
2005/06	2	0	2	40	8	48	50	
2006/07	0	0	0	32	8	40	40	
Totals	89	7	96	356	38	394	490	0

Annex 6.0: Key findings from Ministry of Education and Sports report on Complementary Education in Ghana

Indicator	Public System (P1-P3)	SfL
Average Promotion Rate	84.1%	92.8%
Repetition Rate	4.2%	0
Completion Rate	68.6%	93%
Average Drop out Rate	11.9%	7.2%
Recurrent Costs of Education per child	\$70.80 (90% going into salaries)	\$16.57 (only 4% going to salaries)

(Source: MOESS 2006)

Annex 7.0: Infrastructure Supplied by SfL from 1995 to 2006

No	Year	Furniture	Cost €	Pavilions	Cost €	Teachers Quarters	Cost €
1	1995	15	3,900,000.00	0	-	0	-
2	1996	58	18,850,000.00	10	97,863,500.00	0	-
3	1997	43	16,770,000.00	14	163,192,190.00	0	-
4	1998	37	19,240,000.00	4	51,513,170.00	0	-
5	1999	64	41,600,000.00	8	140,800,000.00	2	3,200,000
6	2000	68	72,488,000.00	17	574,338,931.00	0	-
7	2001	38	40,508,000.00	28	1,064,000,000.00	11	27,500,000
8	2002	25	26,650,000.00	25	1,152,000,000.00	0	-
9	2003	9	19,890,000.00	0	-	0	-
10	2004	8	22,400,000.00	0	-	0	-
11	2005	30	84,000,000.00	0	-	12	258,000,000
12	2006	11	30,800,000.00	2	120,000,000.00	0	-
TOTAL		406	397,096,000.00	108.00	3,363,707,791.00	25	288,700,000

Annex 8.0: National and Northern Region Out of School Population Data for 6-11 Year Cohort (2001/02 to 2005/06).

Assumed
pop. growth
rate 2.0%

Assumed
pop. growth
rate 2.7%

Primary (6-11 years)	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
National					
<i>Population</i>					
Boys	1615257	1678571	1723897	1770495	1818239
Girls	1601978	1657223	1701970	1747973	1795115
Total	3217235	3335794	3425867	3518468	3613354
<i>Enrolment</i>					
Boys	981784	963223	973577	1061422	1264762
Girls	930701	902520	931269	1018364	1222206
Total	1912485	1865743	1904846	2079786	2486968
<i>Out of School</i>					
Boys	633473	715348	750320	709073	553477
Girls	671277	754703	770701	729609	572909
Total	1304750	1470051	1521021	1438682	1126386
Northern Region					
<i>Population</i>					
Boys	171848	178727	183553	188516	193598
Girls	168171	174879	179600	184456	189431
Total	340019	353606	363153	372972	383029
<i>Enrolment</i>					
Boys	91886	90107	96872	104179	131565
Girls	72730	70069	80979	91298	118786
Total	164616	160176	177851	195477	250351
<i>Out of School</i>					
Boys	79962	88620	86681	84337	62033
Girls	95441	104810	98621	93158	70645
Total	175403	193430	185302	177495	132678
% Out of School Population in Northern Region as a proportion of the National out of school Population.	13.44	13.16	12.18	12.34	11.78
% of Pop. (6-11) in northern Ghana as a proportion of the total population in this age cohort	10.57	10.60	10.60	10.60	10.60

(MOESS, 2006)

**Annex 9.0: National and Northern Region Out of School Population for 12-14 year
(2001/02 to 2005/06).**

JSS (12-14 years)	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
National					
<i>Population</i>					
Boys	689066	697000	715821	735191	754995
Girls	658518	668024	686060	704644	723608
Total	1347584	1365024	1401881	1439835	1478603
<i>Enrolment</i>					
Boys	206562	259645	209940	230435	313250
Girls	202461	244235	203917	223921	301829
Total	409023	503880	413857	454356	615079
<i>Out of School</i>					
Boys	482,504	437,355	505,881	504,756	441,745
Girls	456057	423789	482143	480723	421779
Total	938561	861144	988024	985479	863524
Northern Region					
<i>Population</i>					
Boys	60314	62589	64276	66019	67795
Girls	51088	52909	54335	55809	57309
Total	111402	115498	118611	121828	125104
<i>Enrolment</i>					
Boys	9896	16276	12099	13947	17088
Girls	6094	9622	7718	9430	13613
Total	15990	25898	19817	23377	30701
<i>Out of School</i>					
Boys	50,418	46,313	52,177	52072	50707
Girls	44994	43287	46617	46379	43696
Total	95412	89600	98794	98451	94403
Out of School Population in Northern Region as a proportion of the National out of school Population.	10.17	10.40	10.00	9.99	10.93
% of Pop. in northern Ghana as a proportion of the total population in this age cohort (12-14)	8.27	8.46	8.46	8.46	8.46

(Source: MOESS, 2006)

**Annex 10.0: Out of School Population for Upper East and Upper West Regions for
6-11 Year Cohort (2001/02 to 2005/06)**

Upper East Region	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
<i>Population</i>					
Boys	89267	93489	96014	98609	101268
Girls	83119	86721	89061	91470	93936
Total	172386	180210	185075	190079	195204
<i>Enrolment</i>					
Boys	44877	47742	50083	52903	65619
Girls	44039	45984	48388	52507	65131
Total	88916	93726	98471	105410	130750
<i>Out of School</i>					
Boys	44390	45747	45931	45706	35649
Girls	39080	40737	40673	38963	28805
Total	83470	86484	86604	84669	64454
% Out of School Population	6.40	5.88	5.69	5.89	5.72
% of National Pop.	5.36	5.40	5.40	5.40	5.40
Upper West Region					
<i>Population</i>					
Boys	55621	57794	59355	60957	62601.00
Girls	52704	54375	55844	57353	58899.00
Total	108325	112169	115199	118310	121500.00
<i>Enrolment</i>					
Boys	24600	26571	28414	31610	41586.00
Girls	24676	26514	28871	32885	43503.00
Total	49276	53085	57285	64495	85089.00
<i>Out of School</i>					
Boys	31021	31223	30941	29347	21015
Girls	28028	27861	26973	24468	15396
Total	59049	59084	57914	53815	36411
Out of School Population in Upper East and Upper West Regions as a proportion of the national out of school population.	4.53	4.02	3.81	3.74	3.23
% of Pop. (6-11) in northern Ghana as a proportion of the total population in this age cohort	3.37	3.36	3.36	3.36	3.36

(Source: MOESS, 2006)

Annex 11.0: Mean Scores in the Reading Skills Test

District	School	Variable	Female Non- SfLer	Female SfLer	Male Non- SfLer	Male SfLer
Gushegu Karaga	Nawuhigu Primary	Total words	12.5	44.0	76.3	70.0
		Error	4.0	6.0	9.3	3.7
		Correct words	8.5	38.0	67.0	66.3
Yendi	Bachabordo Primary	Total words	40.5	20.3	34.3	45.0
		Error	11.5	8.5	5.5	9.5
		Correct words	29.0	11.8	29.0	25.5
Nanumba	Makayili Primary	Total words	71.5	27.0	80.5	66.0
		Error	3.0	6.3	2.5	3.7
		Correct words	68.5	20.7	78.0	62.3
Gushegu Karaga	Karaga JSS	Total words	65.0	90.0	114.8	100.0
		Error	7.0	10.0	2.2	5.3
		Correct words	58.0	80.0	112.6	94.8
Yendi	Kpabya JSS	Total words	75.7	74.3	126.0	113.3
		Error	4.7	8.3	3.3	1.3
		Correct words	71.0	66.0	122.7	112.0
Nanumba	Bakpaba JSS	Total words	80.0	120.0	60.0	93.3
		Error	10.0	10.7	8.7	4.7
		Correct words	70.0	109.3	51.3	88.7

Annex 12.0: Life Story: Mica.... Ex SfLer (Integrant at JSS), Bakpaba, Nanumba District (raw field data from IA).

Mica Nindola who resides at Bakpaba initially followed cattle and this was done when he wanted to do so, before SfL came to the community. His father and mother enrolled him in SfL where he learnt how to read and write. Mica was very happy that he could read and write. His parents were happy too. Mica said that School for Life made him learn about sanitation, drug abuse, teenage pregnancy and environmental issues.

Mica taught his parents that it is hygienic to sweep your house and surroundings to look neat. He also told the mother it was not good to leave the cooking utensils unwashed after cooking for flies to follow them. It is also bad not to cover your cooked food since the flies that hop on it would give you diseases. The good practices of farming he learnt was also extended to his family. He told his father that it was filth that made his poultry farm to wither and that SfL has taught him that you need to sweep your hens coop to make it neat and also wash their drinking bowl before putting in water and that would make them look healthy. He again told his father that he should not allow his farm get weedy, he also taught them the application of ammonia and fertilizer and personal hygiene. (cleaning of the teeth every morning and in the evenings after eating and before going to bed).

Mica after reforming as a result of attending SfL made his parents happy because he stayed at home but no longer loitered about and this encouraged his parents to integrate him into the formal school. Mica was integrated in Primary five at the formal school in the year 2003 and is presently in JSS. Initially when he was integrated, he said his problem was the speaking of English which he overcame in two months time.

He also saw some differences between teaching in SfL and the formal school system. He was taught in Likpakpaaln his mothers tongue but in the formal school, he was taught in English. He had only one teacher (facilitator) in SfL who taught him all the subjects but in the JSS level, each subject has a teacher.

He also explained that he was taught how to read and write in SfL by breaking the words down whereas in the formal school, the words are not broken. He said they were drilled syllabically in SfL and formed sentences and words with the syllables and that they were also taught vowels and consonants which are absent in the formal school.

When asked how the SfL teaching helped him, he mentioned that, because he was taught in his mothers tongue, it made him understand what he was taught and the vowels and consonants helped him in his pronunciations. Mica said he wants to become a medical doctor in figure in northern to help his community members health.

Annex 13.0: Recurrent Unit Cost per Child in SfL System (2005)

Sp No.	Expenditure Item	Quantity	Class/ District Enrol	Unit Cost Per Item (\$)	Unit Cost Per Pupil (\$)
1	Facilitator's 'SOAP' MONEY	-	25	6.62	0.26 *
2	Ex Books	1	-	0.71	0.71
3	Facilitator incentives (Books, Bags, T-shirt etc)	300	25	10	0.4
4	Pencils/Crayons/Erasers	1	25	52.7	2.11
5	Teaching Equipment	ONESET	25	50	2
6	Facilitator's Manual	1	25	1.5	0.06
7	Learners Primers (CEP/ CST)	10	-	0.75	7.5
8	Facilitators TRG	1	25	7	0.28
9	Animation	10 Districts	10,959	1950.83	1.78
10	Annual Education Forum	540 Participants	10,959	8	0.39
11	Incentives for Facilitators	1	25	10	0.4
12	Capacity Building	1	25	10	0.4
13	CST TRG	1	25	7	0.28
TOTAL					16.57

PRIMARY DATA SOURCE: DANIDA SfL

Note this costing does not include management and staffing costs to operate the program

* EXCLUSIVE OF DOMESTIC/FARM ASSISTANCE

Annex 13.1: Unit Cost per Pupil in Public Primary (2005)

TOTAL RECUR-RENT EXPENDITURE (IN MILLIONS CEDIS)	TOTAL PUBLIC ENROLMENT	UNIT COST	
		¢	\$
1766287	2,741,478	644,283	70.80

\$ = ¢9,100

DATA SOURCE: Education Sector Performance Report (MOES)