



WORLD COCOA FOUNDATION

2009 Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series

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The Private Sector Role in
Investing in Education



- ➔ About learning
- ➔ How Education in Africa got to be what it is
- ➔ What to do with what we have
- ➔ How do we make the changes we need.

About Learning



The business of figuring things out



Learning is

- ➔ Involuntary
- ➔ Incessant
- ➔ Self directed
- ➔ Self assembled (pre-natal or in your dreams)
- ➔ Potentially dangerous –
 - It has no regard for values or truth
 - It just answers questions in a way that makes sense to the learner
- ➔ Learning is biological





Synaptogenesis

- ➔ At the base Glial Cells facilitate the growth of new connections that grow into new brain cells
- ➔ This is a demand driven response
- ➔ When you don't know an answer your brain looks for it.
- ➔ When you find it new knowledge is created
- ➔ Note the feelings associated both with the unknowing and the "ahaa!" of discovery



Learning, viewed in this way, can be described as the satisfaction of a biological urge. A process no different than eating satisfying hunger - a thirst for knowledge ... All this happens before the first penny is spent on education. It predates language . . . But then so does education





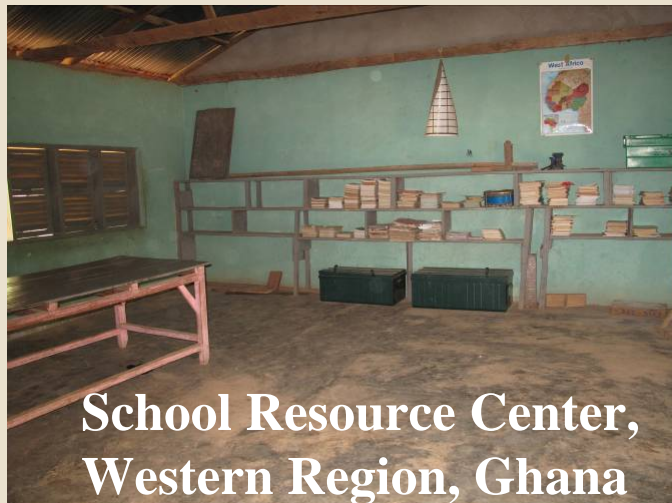
If learning can happen for free do we need education?

You bet! Here's why:

- ➔ Learning is a process that depends on a foundation, an underpinning frame of reference – Culture, Family, Law . . .
- ➔ Education provides the structure that fosters wholesome knowledge creation
- ➔ Without the structure new answers depend on the integrity of the foundation
- ➔ Charlie's AK 47 story



How did education in Africa become what it is today?



**School Resource Center,
Western Region, Ghana**



How did education in Africa become what it is today?

- ➔ Everybody did the “right” thing
 - (Each player operated from their foundation premise)
- ➔ People were learning what they needed through a wholesome family structure
- ➔ Visitors arrived with a different view of learning and education (Takashila and train schedule based)
- ➔ They transplanted their “superior” system
- ➔ That system has had value but misses when it comes to Education For All



We’re not reaching “all”

- ➔ The “System” worked well in developed countries – not so well at first but various assets enabled wide spread use
- ➔ Various encumbrances limits penetration in rural Africa
 - Teacher numbers
 - Teacher training quality
 - School and system administration numbers and skills
 - Physical space
 - Subsistence life has its own needs and calendar
 - And so on



EFA consumes existing capacity

- EFA is admirable and essential
- That leaves no time to develop or redesign system
- And that is the cycle of despair



What can we do with what we have?



What's the private sector role?



Strategic Funding . . .

System R & D is needed

- ➔ It's expensive
- ➔ It's very, very complicated
- ➔ Fraught with foibles and pitfalls and restarts
- ➔ It's unreasonable to expect from a government already overburdened with normal operations and overcharged with EFA
- ➔ Without it the cycle of despair deepens



But

- ➔ The private sector has a vested interest in education
- ➔ Educated employees are much better learners, cooperators and promotable supervisors and organization leaders.
- ➔ What can they do to help?





Private sector can experiment

- ➔ The private sector can fund innovations
- ➔ They have the time and resources to try things the governments might like but haven't the time, staff, authority or even available skill to undertake.
- ➔ They can use IT in ways that complement government education and test new methods like
 - Integrating livelihoods education into school curricula
 - Private education



Or content based relevant education





The Road Ahead . . .



How do we make the changes we need?



Possible innovations and enhancements:

- ➔ Technology
- ➔ Privatization hybrid schools
- ➔ Community ownership
- ➔ Community Participatory Action Research and
- ➔ Direction of learning agenda



