

PARTNERS IN PLAY (P3) ENDLINE IMPACT SUMMARY

Program Description

The Partners in Play (P3) project was a four-year program that enhanced the quality of primary education in 55 districts and three regions in Ghana by increasing teachers' ability to teach core competency-based curriculum using play. The project directly reached 36,123 learners, 805 teachers and 10,184 caregivers and indirectly reached more than 3.3 million learners and 82,000 teachers, contributing to improved literacy outcomes, particularly in reading fluency, vocabulary, phonemic awareness.

The P3 project ran from 2020 to 2024 and was implemented by Right To Play, with support from The LEGO Foundation. Government engagement was central to the success of the P3 project. We worked in close partnership with the Ministry of Education and its agencies to incorporate play-based learning approaches into school curricula and teaching practice.

Context

In Ghana, 87% of children in school are classified as 'learning poor,' meaning that many 10-year-olds are unable to read and understand a simple text. There are also persistent gaps in access and quality education across the country.

To address this issue, Ghana's Ministry of Education implemented significant education reforms to transform teaching and learning, moving away from traditional styles of teaching at all levels and demonstrating a strong commitment to evidence-based creative pedagogies, including play-based learning (PBL).

KEY RESULTS

1

80,000+ Teachers Trained

By the end of the project, over 80,000 teachers were trained to use PBL across Ghana's education system, with 98% of them actively using it in their classrooms, up from just 54% at the start. This shift means teachers were creating safe, inclusive classrooms where children could be engaged in learning essential foundations for literacy, numeracy, and life skills. Rather than relying only on direct training alone, the project used a cascade model that empowered district officials and trained teachers to mentor others. More than 16,000 teachers were trained through the Continuum of Teacher Training. And support continued through mentorship, peer learning groups, and Professional Learning Communities, with many mentees becoming mentors themselves, creating a pipeline of educators and ensuring the impact could grow and sustain long after the project ended.

2

Institutions embed Play-Based Learning into education systems

By the end of the project, 99% of schools had development plans that included play-based learning, showing that PBL is no longer a pilot, but part of the system. This signals a shift from short-term programming to long-term transformation, with PBL embedded in how schools plan, teach, and support student learning. We worked with schools, districts, and teacher training institutions to embed PBL into curricula, mentoring, and school development plans. Centers of Excellence for PBL were established at the University of Education, Winneba, and St. Teresa's College of Education, serving as national hubs of best practice. 48 District Education Offices were supported to lead mentoring, supervision, and training, while schools took ownership by developing all of their School Performance Improvement Plans with PBL strategies.

3

Ghana's Ministry of Education adopts Right To Play co-developed training manual for national use

Through strong partnerships with the Ministry of Education and its agencies, we helped embed PBL into national education policy and training tools. A major milestone was the official adoption of the Kindergarten INSET Training Manual, co-developed by Right To Play, Sabre Education, and IPA, for nationwide use in teacher training. In total, the project supported the development of more than 20 PBL guides and tools, ensuring that holistic skills and playful learning were integrated into Ghana's education system from early childhood through primary school.

KEY LEARNINGS

1

Flexibility and Community-Based Organizations strengthened resilience during the pandemic

During the COVID-19 pandemic we shifted to smaller, localized mentorship and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), so that support for teachers remained continuous even under restrictions. At the same time, partnering with community-based organizations (CBO's) to deliver supplemental literacy activities helped children recover from learning loss, particularly in regions hardest hit. This highlighted the importance of flexible, school-based approaches to teacher development and student learning. Decentralized, community-driven support models are more resilient and effective in times of crisis.



How Freda Keeps Her Large Class Learning

Freda is a primary school teacher in Ghana. She has been teaching for over 16 years. For most of her career, she's struggled to keep her large classes engaged and learning. The recommended class size for primary schools in Ghana is 35 students, but classes are often larger. Teacher shortages and inadequate classroom facilities mean that classes like Freda's sometimes have close to double the recommended number of students. Often, the most student participation she could manage is making students repeat. She knew there must be a better way to teach but wasn't sure how to explore it on her own.

In 2021, Freda received training from Right To Play on how to make learning more engaging through play. The training helped Freda improve her facilitation skills and gave her tips and tools for how to use playful activities to support students' learning and create a positive learning environment in the classroom.

Now, before each lesson, Freda spends time researching the topics in her curriculum so that she can deliver it in new and relevant ways that will keep students' attention. She creates room for her students to be curious, ask questions, and lead activities in class.

The training also boosted Freda's confidence in her own skills as a teacher and enabled her to become more confident in public speaking: "I've sharpened my communication skills with the public and with the learners," she says.

Freda isn't the only teacher in her school who has transformed her approach to teaching. Other teachers who attended the training have introduced learning through play into their classrooms too. Their commitment to advancing students' learning outcomes has improved the bond and teamwork among them. When they need new ideas to keep learning fresh and engaging, they can count on each other.