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Implemented by:



Governance – Ghana

More education through decentralisation

More decentralisation, more schools! This is how the experiences of the District Development Facility in Ghana have been summed up: it's a programme in which the districts of the West African country are able to decide themselves how they want to improve their social infrastructure. KfW Development Bank has financed the programme along with other donors since 2009. The funds supplied mostly go to the education sector.

rural regions are even worse.

Project approach

In places where revenue sharing falls short, the District Development Facility (DDF) financed jointly by Denmark, Germany, France, Canada, Switzerland and the Ghanaian government comes into play. The districts use the funds to finance social infrastructure such as schools and health centres. They themselves decide exactly which ones they want to fund. At the end of the year, the DDF examines whether the districts complied with certain minimum criteria and performed the services promised. Only then will they also receive funds the following year. Those that underperform are excluded for a year, while those performing particularly well

Context

Ghana learned early on that one head office in the capital of Accra is not enough to solve all of the country's problems. The government has been assigning more and more tasks to district administrations since 1992. Yet as well-intentioned as the decentralisation is, many projects up to now have lacked the necessary funding in the country's 216 districts. Of the 7.5% tax revenue supplied by the state to the districts through revenue sharing, very little has actually been made readily available.

The result can be seen in places like Nkroful Community Junior High School in Sekondi. Approximately 60 students were being taught here in a windowless room of a general-purpose building. It didn't even have toilets. Although the twin cities of Sekondi-Takoradi now constitute one of the country's most important development centres with more than 500,000 residents and a booming oil industry, a large portion of the population still lives under precarious circumstances here. The situation is not only lacking in the schools, but in all other areas as well. There is a need for investments in reliable drinking water and electricity supply as well as sewage systems and waste management. Conditions in the

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These students at the junior high school in Nkroful-Sekondi enjoy going to school. Source: KfW, Photographer: Martin Lux

receive additional funding using a calculation scale. All, however, have the opportunity to improve: regardless of their performance, all districts are able to participate in national education and further training programmes.

Performance incentives, reliability, transparency and capacity building are the pillars of the DDF, which the districts should use to improve in the long run. Other factors are the decentralised and needs-based planning as well as the implementation of infrastructure measures aimed at benefiting the population.

Impact

Since 2009, KfW Development Bank and the other donors have used the DDF to fund approx. 4,000 infrastructure projects in all 216 districts. Up to 3,000 district administration employees receive training and further education every year. Schools are at the top of the projects' agenda: about 43 % of the investments are put towards education.

The Nkroful Community junior high school in Sekondi has also received funds from the DDF. Two new classrooms were built for the students at the beginning of 2014. Teachers have a new faculty room to prepare lessons in, where administration is also performed. And above all, there are adequate toilets! This is especially important for the girls, who otherwise wouldn't be able to attend school during menstruation. As a result, more girls are attending classes than before; equal access to education starts with the simple things.

After a year, the expansion of schools like those in Sekondi is not over. The construction of the school

there for example has been designed in such a way that a second floor can be added later on for another classroom and a computer room, provided that the district administration once again provides the funding from the DDF.

The District Development Facility has become an institution that every community in the country knows and values. Other areas receiving investments beyond education are, in particular, healthcare, the construction of public toilets, waste management and wastewater management. The facility also pays for indoor markets, commercial infrastructure and roads. Further funds are urgently needed for investments and education programmes for municipalities' employees. The projected contribution of financial cooperation from 2015 to 2018 amounts to EUR 42 million.

"We're happy and proud to receive support every year from the District Development Facility," explains the mayor of Sekondi-Takoradi, Anthony R. Cudjoe. The annual review of our capacities gives us and all other districts throughout the country an incentive to constantly improve our work for the good of our people." The DDF has not only provided funds. "It has helped us develop a new understanding of what service means. But we still have a lot of work to do in taking all the needs of our citizens into consideration."



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