



30<sup>th</sup> May 2022

## **PRESS STATEMENT**

### **IFEST EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SEEMING SIDELINING OF THE GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE IN ITS OPERATIONS**

1. IFEST has taken notice of a series of events that might have a drastic effect on the Education system in Ghana. It is called an Education System because it has various parts which have to function properly to achieve the common goal of providing quality education for the citizens and improving the human capital capacity of the country.
2. Whereas the Ministry of Education has an oversight responsibility over all its Agencies, there are specific roles assigned to each of these agencies to enable them function effectively within the education ecosystem. For example, National Teaching Council has a mandate to promote teacher professionalism; NaCCA is responsible for Curriculum and Assessment issues at the pre-tertiary level; NaSIA is mandated to provide an independent external evaluation of the quality and standards in basic and second cycle educational institutions in the country on a periodic basis etc.
3. The Ghana Education Service (GES) which is the largest agency under the Ministry of Education is responsible for the implementation of approved national pre-tertiary educational policies and programs to ensure that all Ghanaian children of school-going age irrespective of tribe, gender, disability, religious and political affiliations are provided with inclusive and equitable quality formal education.
4. The mandate of the GES makes it practically impossible for any decision or policy to take place at the Pre-Tertiary level without their input because, they are the implementers of all these policies as mandated by law.

5. IFEST would want to remind the general public about four incidences in the education sector that suggest an attempt to weaken the GES and render it redundant in undertaking its mandate in the sector. These are very worrying trends which should not be swept under the carpet.
  - a. **NATIONAL STANDARD TEST (NST):** IFEST is reliably informed that the GES just like many other institutions in the sector was not in favour of the mode in which the NST was to be conducted. This was against the National Learning Assessment Framework and its associated Operational Plan of making the NST a school-based diagnostic test instead of a WAEC conducted external examination. Against all sound advice, the Ministry went ahead with the test, the conduct of which was characterized by confusion. Almost six months down the line, WAEC is still struggling to produce a single result because most students did not shade the paper, as per our investigations.
  - b. **SCHOOL CALENDAR:** For some time now, we have been experiencing an erratic academic calendar which is uncharacteristic of our pre-tertiary education sector. The GES has been responsible for the school academic calendar all these years, however, recently, the Ministry set up a committee to produce what they said was going to produce a long lasting stable academic calendar. The end result of this decision is a matter of public record.
  - c. **RECRUITMENT OF HEADS:** Documents available to IFEST reveal that far reaching decisions were made on the recruitment of Heads for newly completed STEM schools. This was resisted by the teacher unions. Although the Ministry refuted this claim, there is enough documentation that points to the fact that NAGRAT was right in their claim. It is obvious that this activity does not lie within the mandate of the Ministry.
  - d. **GALOP BROUHAHA:** The conversation on the GALOP Teacher Training issue clearly cements our proposition that the Ministry of education is

gradually juggling the role of policy formulation and implementing agency and this presents the GES as inefficient. It is clear from the correspondence from the World Bank, The GES and the Press Statements from the Ministry that the GES which is mandated to undertake this teacher training exercise was sidelined in the entire process. Without impugning any motives, IFEST cannot fathom how such a project could be purported to have been carried out without the explicit knowledge and involvement of the GES.

6. It is clear from the events mentioned that it seems the Ministry of Education is consciously or unconsciously weakening the GES with its constant acts. It is important to point out that GES needs to be efficient, effective and inspiring in the delivery of its mandates. Any attempt to continue on this path by the Ministry of Education will kill morale within the GES and put the implementation of a lot of policies in the education sector especially at the Pre-Tertiary level in complete disarray as it has been witnessed in some instances. Already, the World Bank has bemoaned the slow implementation of the GALOP projects.

### **Way Forward**

1. IFEST calls on the Minister of Education to show leadership and ensure that there is proper coordination and cordiality between these two critical institutions.
2. We further call on the GES council to ensure that the mandate of the service is not compromised.
3. Finally, we appeal to the President of the Republic of Ghana to step in and ensure that the investments made in the education sector do not go down the drain because of the lack of coordination between these two critical institutions.

Signed



Peter Anti  
(Executive Director).