

# Press Release



For Immediate Release

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## **Ghana Scholarship Bill: YAFO Institute Advocates for Enhanced Decentralized Scholarship Scheme to Empower Needy and Brilliant Students in Ghana.**

The YAFO Institute applauds the Parliament of Ghana for its current assessment of the Ghana Scholarships Authority Bill, 2025, a game-changing piece of legislation aiming at revamping the administration and awarding of government scholarships across the country. This Bill, which is presently being considered by the Joint Committee on Education, Public Administration, and State Interests and Civil Society Organization, is a crucial step in ensuring transparency, meritocracy, and fair access to educational opportunities for all Ghanaians. Additionally, the bill builds collaboration with the National Development Planning Commission to identify areas that are of priority for the development of human resource for the purpose of Government scholarship and determine the academic programs that are critical to national development. We also appreciate the Bill's emphasis on decentralizing scholarship grants to improve regional access and special focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programs, which are vital to national growth.

At the YAFO Institute, we believe that education is the foundation of sustainable development, and we regard the decentralization of scholarship programs as a critical method for empowering not only neglected areas but also provide access to marginalized students. To further strengthen this initiative, we propose an innovative expansion of the decentralized scholarship framework that actively involves basic school head teachers (both private and public) in identifying and supporting needy and brilliant students, ensuring they have unrestricted access to scholarships provided by the Ghana Scholarships Authority.

### **The Case for Enhanced Decentralized Scholarship Schemes**

The YAFO Institute proposes an enhanced decentralized scholarship scheme that uses grassroots knowledge and the proximity of head teachers in primary and junior high schools to bridge the gap between eligible students and scholarship possibilities. Head teachers at the basic schools are uniquely positioned to understand the socioeconomic challenges and academic potential of students who demonstrate academic excellence while also meeting financial hardship, especially in rural and underserved areas where access to scholarship information is often limited. By empowering head teachers to play an important part in the scholarship allocation process, the Ghana Scholarship Authority can guarantee that monies are sent to those who need them the most, avoiding bureaucratic delays, corruptions and any biases inherent in the presidential fiat that established the Scholarship Secretariat since 1960.

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The Ghana Scholarships Authority Bill, 2025, as outlined in Clauses 4 to 12, establishes a governing board comprising high-level representatives from key ministries, the Attorney-General's office, the Association of Ghana Industries, and presidential nominees, ensuring expertise in education, finance, and industry. However, the proposed board lacks grassroots representation, such as head teachers or community education leaders, who possess critical proximity and knowledge of local students' needs and potential. To enhance the Bill's decentralized framework, YAFO Institute recommends including at least one representative from basic school leadership, such as a head teacher nominated by the Ghana Education Service or Association of Private School Owners, Conference of Heads of Assisted Secondary Schools (CHASS), Ghana National Association of Private Schools, on the governing board. This addition would ensure that the Authority's policies and scholarship allocation decisions reflect the realities of underserved communities, fostering greater equity and inclusivity in access to educational opportunities across Ghana.

Our proposed enhancement to the Ghana Scholarships Authority Bill includes the following:

**1. Head Teacher-Led Identification and Nomination System:**

- Establish a formal system within the Ghana Scholarships Authority to incorporate head teachers of basic schools (both public and private) in the scholarship nomination process. Head teachers would make recommendations for students who excel academically while coming from economically disadvantaged families, ensuring that no talent is overlooked due to geographic or informational barriers.
- Create a standardized nomination form that is accessible through the Ghana Scholarships Authority's online portal, allowing head teachers to submit student profiles that include academic records, financial information, and a brief motivation statement.

**2. Capacity Building for Head Teachers:**

- Introduce training programs for head teachers to equip them with the skills to identify eligible students, understand scholarship criteria, and navigate the online application system. These workshops could be organized in collaboration with the Ghana Education Service (GES), National Development Planning Commission and the Scholarships Authority to ensure alignment with national educational goals.
- Provide digital tools, such as tablets or subsidized internet access, to head teachers in remote areas to facilitate their participation in the nomination process, addressing challenges related to digital access in rural communities.
- Use local radio stations, social media, and school assemblies to disseminate information, ensuring that even the most remote communities are aware of scholarship opportunities.

**3. Community-Based Verification Committees:**

- Establish local verification committees at the district level, comprised of head teachers, district education officers, and community leaders, to assess nominations and guarantee openness in the selection process. These committees would collaborate closely with the Scholarships Authority to confirm the eligibility of nominated candidates, lowering the possibility of corruption or favoritism.
- Provide a feedback mechanism in which head teachers and committees may report issues or accomplishments in the nomination process, allowing for continuing improvement of the scholarship scheme.

#### **4. Incentives for Head Teachers and Schools:**

- Recognize and reward those who successfully nominate kids for scholarships. This might include financial rewards, professional development opportunities, or public recognition through awards ceremonies, all of which build a culture of proactive social mobility through scholarship.
- Allocate a percentage of scholarship funding to upgrade fundamental school facilities, such as libraries or computer laboratories, in areas where students get scholarships, resulting in a positive cycle of educational investment.
- Launch targeted awareness campaigns in basic schools (both public and private) to inform students, parents, and teachers about scholarship opportunities available through the Ghana Scholarships Authority. These efforts might include seminars, educational materials, and community engagement events hosted by head teachers to help students understand the application process and promote participation.

#### **5. Integration with STEM and vocational education pathways:**

- Align the decentralized scholarship scheme with the Bill's STEM focus by encouraging head teachers to prioritize nominations for students who excel in science, mathematics, and technology-related subjects. In addition, broaden the plan to encompass vocational and technical education courses, ensuring that students with various skills have access to technical training scholarship.
- Collaborate with local technical institutions and industry to develop mentorship programs for scholarship winners, introducing them to role models and job options in STEM and vocational disciplines.

### **Why This Matters**

The Ghana Scholarships Authority Bill, as stated by Education Minister, Hon. Haruna Iddrisu, aims to eradicate political patronage, corruption, and nepotism from scholarship awarding while ensuring that eligible students benefit from a transparent and merit-based process. Our proposed enhanced decentralization expands on these aims by allowing head teachers, who engage with students on a daily basis and are familiar with their hardship situations, to play a critical role in selecting and developing the next generation of Ghanaian scholars. By decentralizing the process even further to the school level, we can ensure that scholarships reach the most deserving students, particularly those from underrepresented populations and the urban poor who might otherwise go unnoticed.

Furthermore, this proposed enhancement is consistent with the Bill's goal of improving access to excellent education, as defined in the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA) and Goal 4 of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By incorporating head teachers, we develop a long-term, community-driven program that not only recognizes potential but also nurtures an academic excellence and ambition culture for greater development in Ghana.

### **Call to Action**

For the Ghana Scholarships Authority Bill to have the greatest possible impact, the YAFO Institute urge that Parliament include this enhanced decentralized approach. We urge the Joint Committee on Education, Public Administration, and State Interest to take into account how important head

teachers are to guaranteeing that all students have fair access to scholarships. In order to improve and execute this decentralized scholarship authority, we also promote cooperation with stakeholders, including Ghana Education Service or Association of Private School Owners, Conference of Heads of Assisted Secondary Schools (CHASS), Ghana National Association of Private Schools, civil society groups, and local authorities.

The YAFO Institute is prepared to collaborate with the government, policymakers, ministry of education and stakeholders as the Bill moves through Parliament in order to assist the creation of the Ghana Scholarships Authority and the realization of a transparent, inclusive, and impactful scholarship scheme. Together, we can empower Ghanaian dreams, remove barriers to education, and create a more promising future for our country.

## **Conclusion**

The Ghana Scholarship Authority Bill has the potential to transform the educational landscape by providing opportunities for both talented and underprivileged students. Ghana can ensure that every qualified student, regardless of background or region, has unlimited access to the education they deserve by implementing an enhanced decentralized scholarship scheme that takes advantage of the knowledge and proximity of head teachers. The YAFO Institute is ready to work with partners to make this vision a reality, ensuring a brighter and more inclusive future for Ghanaian students. Finally, we advise the Ministry of Education, Hon. Haruna Iddrisu, Minister of Education, and the Ghana Scholarship Authority to test this strategy in a few areas before rolling it out across the country.

**-The End-**

## **Note to Editors**

YAFO Institute spokespeople are available for further comment. [Click Here](#)

*YAFO Institute is an independent public policy research organization—or think tank—with the core aims to promote libertarian ideas and free enterprise research through public policy debate and advocacy for a free and prosperous society in Ghana. The mission of the YAFO Institute is to educate and connect students, young professionals, and entrepreneurs with global opportunities through free enterprise research and innovative public policy advocacy for a prosperous society.*