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PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON ENFORCEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE STANDARDS IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN GHANA

This report has been prepared in compliance with Article 187(2) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana and Section 13(e) of the Audit Service Act, 2000 (Act 584) for submission to Parliament in accordance with Section 20 of the Act.

**Johnson Akuamoah Asiedu
Auditor-General
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03 March 2026

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TRANSMITTAL LETTER

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PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON ENFORCEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE STANDARDS IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN GHANA

I have the honour, in accordance with Article 187(2) of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana and Section 11 of the Audit Service Act, 2000 (Act 584), to submit the Performance Audit Report on the Enforcement of Environmental and Infrastructure Standards in Senior High Schools in Ghana by the National Schools Inspectorate Authority (NaSIA).

2. Senior High Schools (SHSs) in Ghana are confronted with numerous environmental and infrastructural hazards, with serious implications for the safety and welfare of students and staff. The purpose of the audit was to assess the extent to which NaSIA's inspections and sanctions have ensured adherence to environmental and infrastructure standards by SHS and to provide a safe learning environment in SHSs. The audit covered the period 2020 to 2024.

3. We found that NaSIA did not adequately carry out compliance inspections to provide schools with sufficient information to ensure adherence to environmental and infrastructure requirements and collaborate with relevant agencies during capacity-building activities for inspectors. This led to poor sanitary conditions, and unsafe environmental practices.

4. We have made recommendations to help NaSIA improve upon its school compliance inspections.

5. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Johnson A. Asiedu', with a large, stylized initial 'J'.

JOHNSON AKUAMOAH ASIEDU
AUDITOR -GENERAL

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Environmental and Infrastructure Requirement	A set of regulations, guidelines, and best practices designed to ensure the well-being of individuals in a specific environment, such as a workplace or a public space. These standards aim to minimise risks, prevent accidents, and create a safe and healthy environment for all.
Physical Environmental Standards	Environmental standards in schools include standards for air and water quality, waste management, energy efficiency, and overall site sustainability for healthy and productive learning atmosphere.
Infrastructure Standards	School Infrastructure standards include necessities like sufficient, safe, and comfortable classrooms, clean water, and gender-separated sanitation facilities, alongside resources for environment and infrastructure, such as security measures, and facilities for holistic development, such as libraries, laboratories, and sports grounds.
Physical safety	Focuses on safe school buildings, fire and electrical hazards, safety features like fire alarms and emergency exits, safe and age-appropriate playground equipment, secure access control, and measures to prevent bullying and violence.
Chemical safety	Involves the safe handling, storage, and disposal of chemicals used in science laboratories and other areas.
Inspectors	Professionals who are engaged to evaluate educational infrastructure and environment by collecting, analysing and summarising data to inform policy and practice on school operations.
Whole School Inspection	A comprehensive evaluation of a school's overall performance, encompassing teaching, learning, leadership, and management. It is a combination of School Performance and School Compliance Inspections.
Compliance Inspection	The school inspection which involves the evaluation of the school's compliance with the Ministry of Education's standards on Curriculum and Planning, School Management and Resources and Environment and Infrastructure.
Performance Inspection	The school inspection which involves a comprehensive assessment of a school's effectiveness through evaluating various aspects of the school, including student achievement, teaching quality, school leadership and management, teaching and learning and academic assessment to ensure schools are providing high-quality education.
Follow-up Inspection	An evaluation of schools' implementation of recommendations made from previous school inspections.
Inspection Evaluation Framework (IEF)	A structured process used to assess the performance and compliance of educational institutions according to set indicators. It is divided into two parts: A and B. Part A evaluates School Performance while Part B evaluates School's Compliance to MoE standards.
Health and hygiene	Consider the provision of clean water and adequate sanitation facilities, promoting healthy eating habits, and Immunisation programs to manage infectious diseases, First Aid and Emergency Care services, mental health support, and counselling services.
Indicator	An area of focus in inspection activities.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ERBA	Education Regulatory Bodies Act
GES	Ghana Education Service
GHS	Ghana Health Service
GNFS	Ghana National Fire Service
GoG	Government of Ghana
E&I	Environment and Infrastructure
IEF	Inspection Evaluation Framework
IGF	Internally Generated Fund
IGS	Inspector-General of Schools
ISD	Inspections & Supervisions Directorate
LI	Legislative Instrument
MMDA	Metropolitan and Municipal District Assemblies
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
NaSIA	National Schools Inspectorate Authority
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIB	National Inspectorate Board
PTEI	Pre-Tertiary Educational Institutions
RM&E	Research, Monitoring and Evaluation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEaIP	School Establishment and Inspection Policy
SHS	Senior High School
WHO	World Health Organisation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Environmental and infrastructure (E&I) standards in Ghana's Senior High Schools (SHSs) are critical to quality education, student health and safety, and the sustainability of public investment in education. Well-maintained school facilities support effective teaching and learning, improve student performance and retention, and reduce health and safety risks. Strengthening compliance with these standards therefore contributes to improved learning outcomes, protection of student welfare, and sustainable development within the education sector.

2. In line with the Education Regulatory Bodies Act, 2020 (Act 1023), the National Schools Inspectorate Authority (NaSIA) is mandated to ensure compliance with environmental and infrastructure standards in SHSs through routine inspections, supervision, and the sanctioning of defaulting schools. NaSIA was selected for this audit because of its central role in enforcing these standards and safeguarding the school environment.

3. Despite this mandate, there are SHSs that continue to experience poor environmental and infrastructural conditions, largely due to limited awareness of standards and weak compliance. Although NaSIA spent approximately GH¢1.5 million to inspect 278 SHSs between 2023 and 2024, inspection activities focused mainly on academic performance rather than adherence to E&I standards. This approach limited the effectiveness of inspections and negatively affected the health, safety, and well-being of students and staff.

What We Did

4. We assessed the implementation of NaSIA's activities in enforcing environmental and infrastructure standards in SHSs. Specifically, we examined whether NaSIA:

- conducted compliance inspections in all SHSs,

- carried out follow-up inspections on recommendations issued and
- sanctioned schools that failed to comply with E&I standards.

5. We reviewed relevant documents, interviewed inspection officers, and visited selected NaSIA-inspected schools to physically assess environmental and infrastructure conditions for the period 2020 to 2024.

What We Found

6. We noted that NaSIA did not adequately conduct compliance inspections to provide schools with sufficient information to ensure adherence to environmental and infrastructure standards. Inspection activities largely prioritised academic performance over compliance with Ministry of Education (MoE) standards on E&I, limiting the ability of inspections to generate practical, time-bound recommendations.

7. NaSIA also did not collaborate effectively with relevant agencies during inspection and capacity-building activities, resulting in gaps in the quality and quantity of inspection data and challenges in meeting inspection targets. In addition, the absence of School Health Education Programme (SHEP) coordinators in many schools weakened awareness creation on health and safety practices among students and staff.

8. Furthermore, NaSIA did not conduct follow-up inspections or apply sanctions to defaulting schools during the period under review. Follow-up inspections were not planned or undertaken due to inadequate staffing and logistics, as well as the lack of clear timelines in inspection reports for schools to address identified deficiencies. Consequently, no schools were sanctioned between 2020 and 2024. The absence of follow-up inspections and enforcement actions increased the risk of accidents and incidents.

What we recommended

9. To enhance the effectiveness of NaSIA's enforcement of environmental and infrastructure standards in SHSs, we recommended the following corrective actions.

a. To improve compliance inspections:

- i. NaSIA should collaborate with the Ghana Education Service (GES) to ensure the assignment of SHEP coordinators to all SHSs, such as to train students and staff on healthy practices and coordinate health education activities in line with MoE standards are carried out,
- ii. NaSIA should support GES to undertake awareness-creation campaigns in SHSs to engage school management on the importance of complying with environmental and infrastructure standards and
- iii. NaSIA should strengthen the training of inspectors to ensure the issuance of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) recommendations that support effective planning and implementation by schools.

b. To strengthen follow-up inspections and sanctions:

- i. NaSIA should expedite the establishment of all regional offices to improve inspection coverage and follow-up activities,
- ii. NaSIA should include clear timelines for the implementation of recommendations in all inspection reports and
- iii. The Inspection and Supervision Directorate should ensure that inspection reports are shared with regional directors to facilitate follow-up inspections and enforcement actions.

10. Management of NaSIA agreed with the findings and indicated that the recommendations have been noted for implementation.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Motivation for the audit

Environmental and Infrastructure (E&I) standards are essential benchmarks that ensure school facilities are safe, sustainable, and conducive to effective teaching and learning. These standards guide how buildings and related systems are designed, constructed, and maintained to promote the health and well-being of students and staff.¹

2. In the context of Senior High Schools (SHSs) in Ghana, environmental standards cover areas such as sanitation, waste management, water quality, energy use, and the preservation of the school's natural surroundings. Infrastructure standards, on the other hand, include the conditions and adequacy of classrooms, dormitories, laboratories, libraries, dinning halls, furniture, and utilities such as electricity, water, and internet connectivity. These elements form the foundation for a safe and productive learning environment.²

3. Implementing, adhering to, and enforcing these standards are critical because they directly influence students' health, academic performance, and overall school experience. Compliance with these standards supports quality education and contributes to Ghana's broader goal of achieving inclusive and sustainable educational development as indicated in Sustainable Development Goals 4 (SDG 4).³

¹https://www.nasia.gov.gh/wp-content/uploads/NaSIA_Final-SEaIP_DR.HHA.YAA.REVIEW_30APRIL2021_CLEAN-VERSION.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

²https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s44217-025-00483-w?utm_source=chatgpt.com

³https://www.unesco.org/education/edurights/media/docs/a4f4742655b4c9e084cc0cf353902c3c40d23107.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

4. Senior High Schools in Ghana are confronted with numerous E&I hazards that have serious consequences for both students and staff. These hazards include fire outbreaks; the spread of infectious diseases such as influenza and chickenpox; and poorly lit areas, which increase the risk of injuries and criminal activities. Laboratory and workshop-related accidents - such as chemical burns and injuries resulting from improper use of tools and equipment - are also prevalent. In addition, schools face weather-related hazards including severe storms that may lead to flooding and other forms of infrastructural damage. Other common risks in SHSs include sports-related injuries, improper handling of medical emergencies, non-compliance with food safety requirements, improper storage of hazardous substances, poor sanitary conditions, unsafe building structures, and antisocial behaviour among students. These hazards pose significant threats to the health, safety, and overall well-being of the school community and therefore require comprehensive preventive and management strategies.

5. To ensure that the educational environment is safe and conducive for learning, the Government of Ghana established the National Schools Inspectorate Authority (NaSIA) to periodically evaluate school facilities and practices to ensure compliance with Ministry of Education (MoE) standards on environment and infrastructure.

6. Despite government's investment of about GH¢30m for NaSIA's schools' inspections from 2021 to 2024, there remains public concern and media reportage indicating collapse of school buildings, fire incidents, deaths, and unclean environments in senior high schools, which compromise students' well-being⁴.

⁴ <https://metrotvonline.com/schools-must-prioritize-student-health-and-safety-your-procurement-eye/>
<https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Over-20-pupils-escape-death-as-school-building-collapses-in-the-Central-Region-1930635>, <https://www.pulse.com.gh/news/local/clash-between-2-shss-leaves-1-person-dead-5-injured/d5e899j>
<https://www.myjoyonline.com/fire-ravages-labone-shs-girls-dormitory/#:~:text=A%20fierce%20fire%20has%20swept,two%20others%20suffered%20partial%20damage>

7. In view of this, the Auditor-General, in line with Section 13(e) of the Audit Service Act, 2000 (Act 584), commissioned this audit on the enforcement of environment and infrastructure standards in senior high schools in Ghana.

1.2 Scope of the Audit

8. We examined the activities of NaSIA from January 2020 to December 2024 and carrying out Compliance inspections in SHS with focus on Environment and Infrastructure (E&I), with its associated follow-up inspections, and issuance of sanctions to SHSs that failed to adhere to the MoE standards on E&I. The audit was carried out in five selected regions namely Ashanti, Eastern, Greater Accra, Northern, and Western. We visited NaSIA Regional offices and inspected a total of 25 schools in these five regions. See table 2 for the list of SHSs inspected.

1.3 Audit objective

9. To assess the extent to which NaSIA's inspections and sanctions have led to the adherence to environment and infrastructure standards by SHS to provide a safe learning environment in SHSs.

1.4 Audit questions, Assessment criteria, and Sources of criteria.

10. Table 1 presents the audit questions, their corresponding assessment criteria, and the sources from which the criteria were derived.

Table 1: Audit questions, assessment criteria, and sources of the criteria.

Audit Question	Assessment Criteria	Source of Criteria
<u>Objective 1 (Inspections and Recommendations)</u> 1. Did NaSIA inspect, recommend and issue reports on environment and Infrastructure standards in SHSs? a. Does NaSIA prepare and equip inspectors for inspections? b. Does NaSIA conduct Compliance (E&I) inspections every three years as required by law? c. Do inspection reports adequately capture environment and	• NaSIA is to establish inspection panels to provide an independent external evaluation of the quality of facilities in SHS. • NaSIA is to conduct inspections with purpose, duration and in cycles. • The ERBA requires the authority to inspect senior high schools to ensure environment and infrastructure facilities meet	• Section 92(1), 92(2)(c) of The Education Regulatory Bodies Act 2020, (Act 1023). • Section 3.2 of the Guidelines for the Establishment and Inspection of Pre-Tertiary Schools in Ghana (pg. 28- 29). • Section 4.3 (Part B) of School Establishment and Inspection Policy (SEaIP) • Section 2, Standard 5 of the Standards and Guidelines for practice of inclusive education in Ghana.

infrastructure concerns? d. Does NaSIA report on the outcome of inspections and communicate its findings to relevant stakeholders and key players for action? e. Does NaSIA collaborate with other agencies to create awareness on E&I standards and practices required in the schools?	the ministry of education standards in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders when needed.	• Section 127 of the Education Regulatory Bodies Act 2020, (Act 1023). • Indicator 32 of IEF in the Handbook for the Inspection of Public and Private Pre-Tertiary Schools in Ghana.
<u>Objective 2 (Follow-up and Sanctions)</u> 2. Are SHS sanctioned for non-adherence to	• NaSIA is required to monitor senior high schools to	• Section 89 (2) (b) of The Education Regulatory

E&I inspection recommendations? a. Does NaSIA make recommendations on E&I with specific timelines for implementation by schools? b. Are there mechanisms in place to monitor the implementation of inspection recommendations in SHS? c. Do the schools address recommendations in a timely and effective manner? d. Does NaSIA impose sanctions for non-compliance	ensure the implementation of inspection recommendations and compliance with environment and infrastructure standards. • NaSIA is to prescribe disciplinary measures for a pre-tertiary education institution that fails to comply with the standards and guidelines issued by the Authority.	Bodies Act 2020, (Act 1023). • Section 3.4.2 (Step 3) of the Guidelines for the Establishment and Inspection of Pre-Tertiary Schools in Ghana. • Section 89 (2)(b) of The Education Regulatory Bodies Act 2020, (Act 1023).
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with recommendati on? e. Have the sanctions led to measurable improvements in school environment and Infrastructure conditions?		
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Source: Audit Teams Compilation (August 2024).

1.5 Audit standards, sampling and methodology

1.5.1 Audit Standards

11. We carried out the audit in accordance with the International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions (ISSAIs), relevant to performance auditing. These are: ISSAIs 100-Fundamental Principles of Public-Sector Auditing, ISSAI 300- Fundamental Principles of Performance Auditing, and ISSAI 3000 - Performance Audit Standard.

1.5.2 Audit Sampling

12. We randomly sampled a total of 25 schools from Ashanti, Eastern, Greater Accra (head office), Northern, and Western regions representing the regions where NaSIA had a regional office and the highest number of SHSs (*See Appendix H2*). Table 2 shows the schools selected.

Table 2: Schools sampled by the audit team.

SCHOOL	REGION	SCHOOL	REGION
Presby SHS –Teshie	Greater Accra	Ghana Secondary Technical School	Western
Presby SHS – La	Greater Accra	T. I. Ahmadiyyah SHS	Ashanti
Presby SHS – Osu	Greater Accra	Kumasi Anglican SHS	Ashanti
Accra High SHS	Greater Accra	Koforidua Technical School	Eastern
Kinbu SHS	Greater Accra	Akyem Adonten SHS	Eastern
HOTCASS	Greater Accra	Koforidua Sec. Tech. Sch.	Eastern
St Mary’s SHS – Korle-Bu	Greater Accra	Bright SHS	Eastern
St Mary’s Boys' SHS – Takoradi	Western	Ghana Secondary School – Koforidua	Eastern
St John's School – Takoradi	Western	Oti Boateng SHS	Eastern
Bompeh SHS	Western	Pope John SHS	Eastern
Takoradi SHS	Western	Tamale Secondary School	Northern
Archbishop Porter Girls'	Western	King Abubakar Sadiq SHS	Northern
Fijai SHS	Western		

Source: Audit Teams Compilation (August 2024)

1.5.3 Methodology

13. We reviewed relevant documents and interviewed scheduled officers on how NaSIA conducted Compliance inspections and follow-ups to ensure that inspection recommendations were implemented by defaulting SHSs. We also visited sampled schools to ascertain their environmental and infrastructure conditions.

a. Documents review

14. The team reviewed documents relevant to the audit such as correspondence between NaSIA and relevant stakeholders, NaSIA work plans, and NaSIA’s inspection budgets. See *Appendix A* for details of documents reviewed and reasons.

b. Interviews

15. We interviewed officers from NaSIA who played key roles in compliance inspection activities to enforce E&I standards in SHSs to corroborate information gathered from document reviews. We also interviewed management of the SHSs to know how E&I standards are met. See *Appendix B* for details.

c. Inspections

16. We carried out inspections on some E&I facilities – kitchen, laboratory, dormitory, sanitary areas, waste disposal areas, infirmary, school boundary - in SHSs to confirm their existence, operations and whether management of the SHSs had adhered to NaSIA's recommendations from initial inspections. See *Appendix C* for details.

CHAPTER TWO

ENFORCING ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE STANDARDS IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

2.1 Historical background

17. In 1992, after the Government of Ghana had ratified the Convention of the Rights of the Child, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ministries of Health (MoH) were mandated by the Government to introduce an integrated health education and health delivery services to complement academic components of formal education. The School Health Education Programme (SHEP) Unit of the Ghana Education Service (GES) was then created.⁵

18. To complement the efforts of SHEP, the government of Ghana established the National Inspectorate Board (NIB) in 2008, by the Education Act, 2008 (Act 778) as an agency under the GES with the mandate to ensure quality education in all public and private pre-tertiary institutions by independently evaluating, enforcing and promoting high standards for quality education. In 2019, the NIB was reconstituted into the National Schools Inspectorate Authority (NaSIA) with the mandate to ensure, among other things, a safe and conducive quality learning environment in Pre-Tertiary Educational Institutions (PTEI) through periodic inspections, evaluations and sanctions of schools.

19. The Inspection and Supervision (I&S) Division of NaSIA, which oversees the operations of schools, is responsible for conducting compliance inspections using indicators outlined in Part B of the Inspection Evaluation Framework (IEF). The IEF serves as a tool for assessing schools' adherence to established standards, with Environment and Infrastructure constituting one of the key assessment indicators. The E&I is one of the four indicators under compliance

⁵ <https://ges.gov.gh/school-health-education/> Accessed 10 April 2025

inspection that examines four areas, namely, Health and Safety, Facilities, Fire Safety and Emergency Procedure, and the Environment.

20. Although E&I requirement is a small component in the IEF, its impact on education is unquantifiable when overlooked. *Appendix D* provides the E&I indicators which guide NaSIA's Compliance inspections.

2.2 Mandate of NaSIA

21. The National Schools Inspectorate Authority (NaSIA) is mandated by section 92.1&2(c) of the Education Regulatory Bodies Act (ERBA), 2020 (Act 1023) to provide an independent external evaluation of the quality and standards in basic and second cycle educational institutions to ensure a safe and conducive learning environment in the country every three years.⁶

2.3 Functions of NaSIA

22. The functions of NaSIA in relation to the area under review include to:
- a. develop and enforce highest quality standards and guidelines to be observed in public and private pre-tertiary educational institutions throughout the country, ⁷
 - b. provide an independent external evaluation of the quality and standards in educational institutions including inspecting the E&I facilities available in the educational institutions and⁸
 - c. maintain a register of all pre-tertiary educational institutions.⁹

2.4 Laws, Regulations and Policies

23. The legal frameworks relevant to this audit are:

⁶ National Schools Inspectorate Authority (NaSIA) is changing the story of educational standards - The Business & Financial Times (thebftonline.com)

⁷ Education Regulatory Bodies Act 2020, (Act 1023). Section 88, 89 subsection 1(a). This includes E&I standards.

⁸ Section 92.2(c) of the Education Regulatory Bodies Act 2020, (Act 1023).

⁹ Section 89.4 of the Education Regulatory Bodies Act 2020, (Act 1023)

- The Education Regulatory Bodies Act 2020, (Act 1023) which authorises NaSIA to ensure that schools are safe and conducive for learning,
- Standards and Guidelines for Practice of Inclusive Education in Ghana outlines the Ministry of Education's requirement on E&I in schools,
- The Guidelines for the Establishment and Inspection of Pre-Tertiary Schools in Ghana, (2021) which provides guidelines for inspections of schools,
- The Schools Establishment and Inspection Policy (SEaIP) which guides the implementation of inspection activities and
- The Handbook for the Inspection of Public and Private Schools in Ghana 2023, which contains NaSIA's quality indicator, the Inspection Evaluation Framework (IEF) and its standards.

2.5 Funding

24. For the period under review, NaSIA budgeted for GH¢53.68m out of which GH¢34.6m was received from GoG and IGF for its administrative and operational purposes such as goods and services, compensation of employees and capital expenditure. We noted that NaSIA did not budget or receive any funds from IGF for 2020 because the Act (Act 1023) which established the Authority was passed in 2020, as such the authority begun its IGF collection in 2021. Also, from 2021 to 2024, the authority received a total amount of GH¢1.88m from its donor partners out of which GH¢1.5m (80%) was used to carry out compliance inspection in 278 senior high schools¹⁰ between 2023 and 2024. Table 3 below provides details of the funding.

¹⁰ Cost of inspection and the rate per school depends on the sponsor and the nature of the inspection. See appendix H3

Table 3: NaSIA's funding/ expenditure on Inspection of 278 SHS - 2023 to 2024.

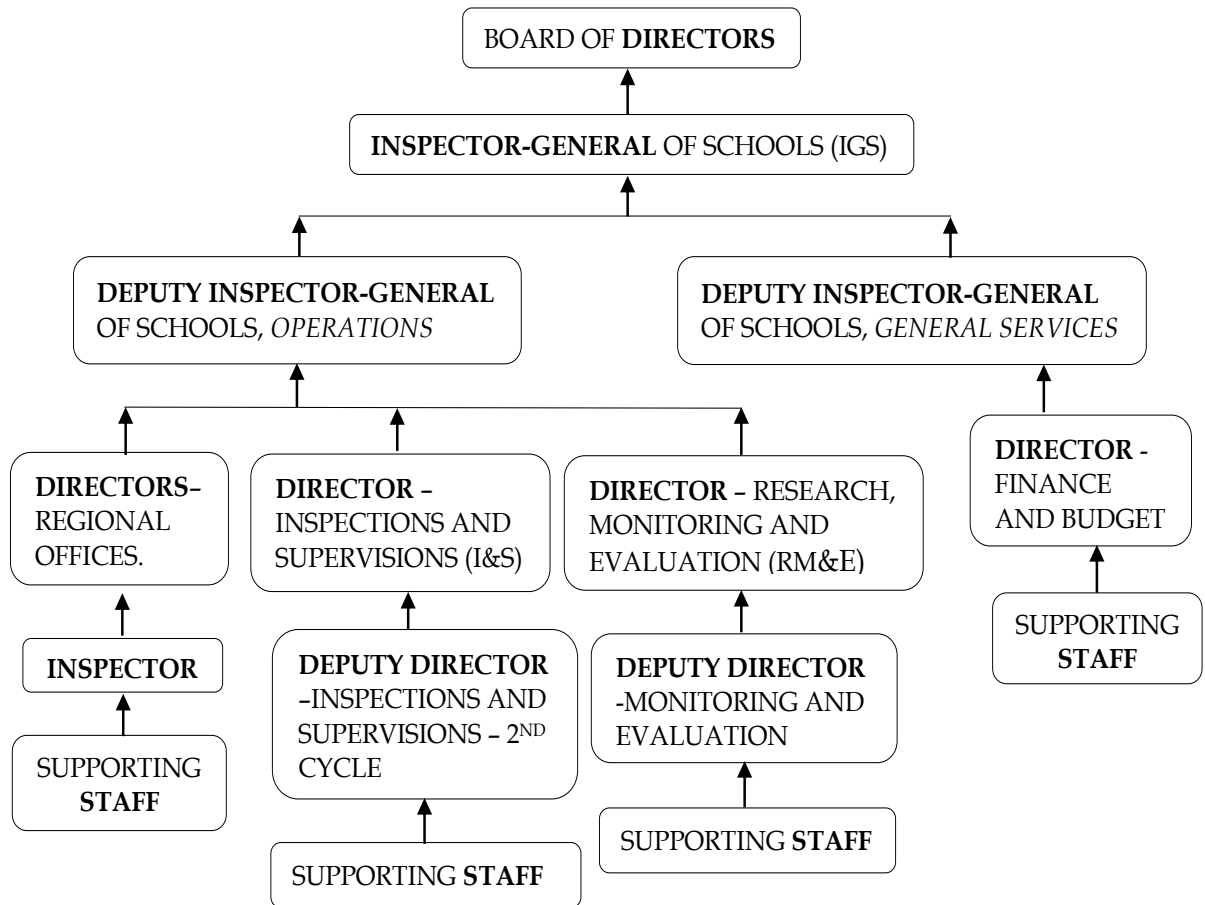
Source of funding	Year	Budget - GH¢	Actual - GH¢
GoG	2020-2024	30,039,164.00	16,939,088.68
IGF	2021-2024	23,645,584.00	17,701,885.55
Sub -Total		53,684,748.00	34,640,974.23
Bigwin Philanthropy	2023	1,095,181.00	1,095,181.00
	2024	0.00	0.00
Transforming Teaching, Education & Learning	2023	442,085.00	97,920.00
	2024	344,165.00	344,165.00
Sub -Total		1,881,431.00	1,537,266.00
GRAND TOTAL		55,566,179.00	36,178,240.23

Source: Inspections and Supervision directorate of NaSIA.

2.6 Organisational Structure of the Operations Division of NaSIA

25. Figure 1 below represents the organogram of the Operations division of NaSIA with regards to compliance inspections on E&I and follow-up of implementation of inspection recommendations in SHSs. NaSIA is headed by the Inspector General of Schools (IGS) who is overseen by a board of directors. The IGS is supported by two deputies and 18 directors, who are responsible for inspection and supervision, research, monitoring and evaluation of all the regions. The finance unit at the general service directorate was responsible for financing inspection activities. At the time of the audit, NaSIA had ten regional directors: Ashanti, Bono, Bono East, Eastern, Greater Accra, Northern, Upper West, Volta, Western, and Western North. At the regional offices, each director is assisted by not less than two inspectors, and supporting staff such as an IT personnel, administrator, secretary, driver, accountant, and a cleaner.

**Figure 1: Organisational Structure of the Operations Division on Compliance
Inspection of NaSIA.**



Source: Operation Directorate of NaSIA on Compliance

2.7 Key players and stakeholders

26. Table 4 below presents the key players and stakeholders involved in the E&I inspections and follow-up processes.

Table 4: Key players and stakeholders and their responsibilities.

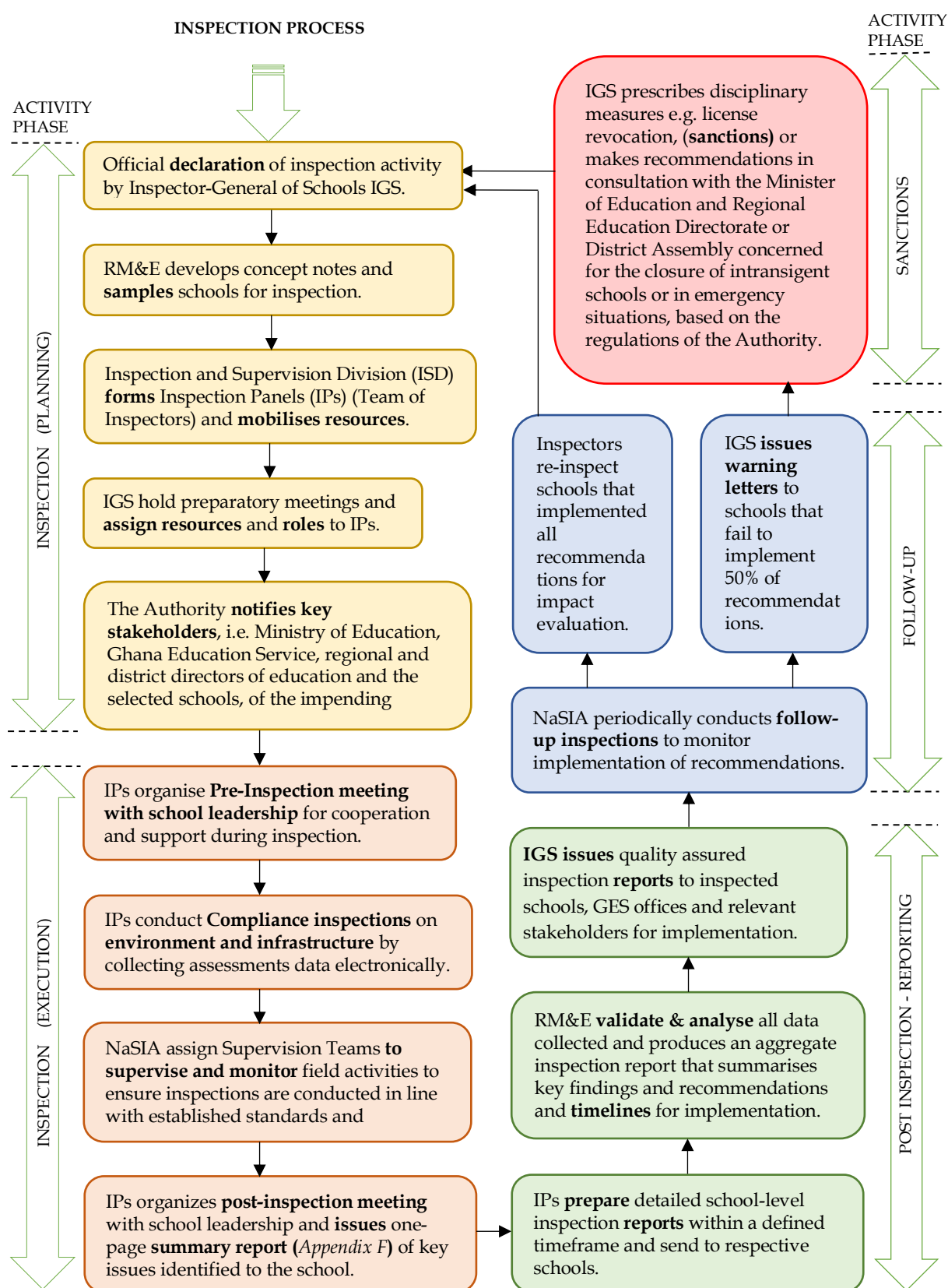
Key Players	Roles and Responsibilities
Inspector General of Schools (IGS)	Empanel and resource team of inspectors, carries out quality assurance on/and approves inspection reports.
Deputy Inspector General of Schools (D-IGS)-Operations	Assist the IGS to Manage the operations of schools' inspectors.
Director, Inspections and Supervisions directorate (ISD).	Organises and supervises school inspection activities.
Director, Research, Monitoring and Evaluation directorate (RM&E)	Analyse and Validates data submitted by school inspectors and writes inspection reports on findings and recommendations.
School Inspectors/Inspection Panels (IP)	They carry out inspections and gather data on the status of schools' compliance with E&I requirement after which they prepare a one-page summary report for the school for implementation.
Director, Regional Offices	Carry out Follow-up inspections, monitor school operations and ensure the implementation of inspection recommendations.
School Management	Ensures the implementation of the recommendations.
SHS students	Implementors of standards through practice in senior high schools.
Stakeholders	Roles and Responsibilities
Ministry of Education (MoE)	Setting E&I standards to be implemented by the schools.
Ghana Education Service (GES)	Provides and oversees Senior High Education.
Development Partners (DP)	Provide funding support for research and inspections.
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Prescribes standards and guidelines relating to the pollution of air, water, land, and any form of environmental pollution.
Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS)	Provide fire safety services to schools.
SHEP Coordinators	Conduct health and safety training or drills for students and staff and create awareness of MoE standards which include E&I requirements to the school's administration.

Source: Audit Team.

2.8 Process Description

27. The flowchart below (figure 2) summarises the enforcement process of E&I standards in SHS with process details in *Appendix E*.

Figure 2: Enforcement of environment and Infrastructure



Source: Audit team analysis of NaSIA's guideline for School Inspection and Establishment of Pre-Tertiary schools.

CHAPTER THREE

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Introduction

28. This chapter presents our findings, conclusions and recommendations based on the information we collected, and the evidence gathered during the conduct of this audit. With regards to the enforcement of Environment and Infrastructure (E&I) standards in Senior High Schools (SHSs), we identified challenges with respect to the following areas:

1. NaSIA did not adequately carry out Compliance inspection to provide sufficient information to schools to ensure adherence to E&I standards.
2. NaSIA did not conduct follow-up inspections to identify and sanction defaulting schools.

3.2 NaSIA did not adequately carryout Compliance inspections to provide sufficient information to schools to ensure adherence to E&I requirement.

29. Section 92 (1) & (2) (c) of the Education Regulatory Bodies Act (ERBA), 2020 (Act 1023) and Part B of the Inspection Evaluation Framework (IEF) in the Handbook for the Inspection of Public and Private pre-tertiary schools in Ghana require NaSIA to evaluate schools' adherence with the Ministry of Education (MoE) standards at least once in every three years. We therefore expect NaSIA to carry out inspections in all Senior High Schools at least once every three years to provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses related to compliance with environment and infrastructure standards and make recommendations. This information is useful for planning and implementation of environment and infrastructure interventions and ensure adherence to MoE standards to improve environment and infrastructure in SHSs.

30. We noted that NaSIA trains, equips, and supervises school inspectors with the view to gather the right quantity and quality of data and to meet inspection targets. However, NaSIA did not collaborate with relevant agencies such as the Ghana National Fire Service, Environmental Protection Agency, MMDA's and GES in their compliance inspection capacity building activities for the audit period.

31. From 2021 to 2024, out of the 712 public SHSs in Ghana, I&S Department of NaSIA carried out inspections in 24 and 254 public senior high schools in 2023 and 2024 respectively, representing 39% of Senior High Schools in Ghana. The inspectors produced aggregated reports which were disseminated to the regional and municipal directors of education and heads of schools for implementation of recommendations. Table 5 shows the results in percentage of environment and infrastructure issues found on the 278 schools inspected in 2023 and 2024.

Table 5: Summary of findings and recommendations on NaSIA's Compliance inspections in 216 SHSs.

No.	H & S ISSUES	2023	2024	Recommendation
1	Sports Facilities	30% fell short	Not reported on	Need immediate attention
2	Toilet/Urinal Facilities	87.5% Unfit for use.	22.75% Unsatisfactory	Need immediate attention
3	Water Supply	87.5% Unsatisfactory	Not reported on	Need immediate attention
4	Canteen/Dining Facilities	37.5% Not conducive environment	Not reported on	Need immediate attention
5	Make-shift Kitchens	67.7% Unsatisfactory	Not reported on	Need immediate attention
6	Boys Dormitory	92.3% Unsuitable	Not reported on	Need immediate attention
7	Girls Dormitory	83.3% Unsuitable	Not reported on	Need immediate attention
8	Girls Bath house	89.5% Unsatisfactory	Not reported on	Need immediate attention
9	Boys Bath House	100% Unsatisfactory	Not reported on	Need immediate attention
10	Boundaries/Fence Walls	67.7% Vulnerable to Encroachment	Not reported on	Need immediate attention
11	Sick Bay	100% Inappropriate/ Undesignated/ Improvised	28.57% Without adequate facilities	Need immediate attention
12	Waste Disposal	Not reported on	19.58% Inadequate waste disposal system	Need immediate attention

Source: NaSIA 2023 aggregated schools inspection report.

32. Our analysis from table 5 above showed that the two reports contained more information on schools' academic performance and little information on school compliance to MoE standards. We noted that SHSs are operating with improvised sick bays that are inappropriate and inadequate. There was also unsuitable accommodation for students, inadequate and poorly maintained sanitary facilities, unsafe water sources, and school boundaries that were vulnerable to encroachment. We however, noted that NaSIA's recommendation was not adequate to elicit any action towards adherence.

33. We also noted that there was no information on fire warning systems, chemical storage areas in the laboratories, school facility maintenance schedule, electrical safety, lighting systems, safety training systems, and School Health Education Programme (SHEP) Coordinators. The report, however, indicated that none of the schools inspected fully complied with all the E&I requirements, with at least one case of non-compliance observed in every aspect of the E&I standards considered during the inspection.

34. We visited six out of the 24 SHSs that NaSIA had inspected and found that E&I standards were not fully adhered to. For example, conditions at washrooms/toilets, infirmaries, dormitories, waste disposal areas, food preparatory areas, storage areas, and sources of drinking water were deplorable and did not meet the E&I standards mentioned (see Figures 4 and 5). Safety facilities such as fire warning systems, chemical storage areas, school accessibility and lighting systems also fell short of the standards. We observed that some of the school buildings were not maintained and had cracks, undermining their safety. The environments of 21 SHSs visited were weedy and harboured reptiles as reported by the school management. Figure 3 below provides two pictures while Appendix C provides details on E&I conditions in the six SHSs inspected by the audit team.

Figure 3: Pictures of dilapidated building and environmental conditions of two SHSs in Takoradi inspected by the audit team.



Deteriorating slab over a walkway at GSTS, Takoradi

Weedy and marshy area at Bompeh SHS

35. All 25 SHSs visited by the audit team did not have functioning fire extinguishers at areas such as laboratories, kitchens (where gas cylinders were placed closed to stoves), and dormitories. Eight SHSs had exposed electrical power points such as uncovered sockets, wires hanging from switches, uncovered fan regulators and control boards. The dormitories in all the SHSs visited, except two, were overcrowded, stuffy and dark. Figure 4 below shows some details.

Figure 4: Dangerous and Unsafe situations in some SHSs inspected by the audit team



Gas cylinders close to burners at food preparation area, Oti Boateng SHS.

Uncovered fan regulator close to a student's bed, GSTS.

Exposed cable on path to dormitories at St Johns SHS, Takoradi.

36. None of the schools visited had a SHEP coordinator as required by the MoE standards, which require the SHEP coordinator to collaborate with NaSIA to educate students and staff on E&I standards and practices.

37. Out of 50 students and ten teachers randomly interviewed about schools' emergency procedures and plans, none was able to recount any procedure or indicate the existence of an emergency plan for the school. This indicates the absence of E&I training and awareness among students and staff.

38. We attributed the non-adherence of environment and infrastructure standards to poor collaboration between inspectors and stakeholders for a comprehensive training. We also noted that NaSIA's reports do not put emphasis on the absence of E&I standards and the lack of knowledge on the MoE standards by the school's administration. For example, no report mentioned the absence of a SHEP Coordinator/designated officers in the schools who are supposed to conduct safety trainings or drills and create E&I awareness for students and staff.

39. As a result, inspected schools did not receive relevant and comprehensive information on the status of their E&I facilities and practices to enable them plan and implement the recommendations thereof.

Conclusion

40. NaSIA's recommendations to Senior High Schools were not adequate to elicit appropriate action by the schools as they were not specific, time-bound and clearly defined to suit the status of their E&I facilities and practices.

Recommendation

41. We recommended that:

- i. NaSIA should liaise with GES to assign SHEP Coordinators to all SHSs to train students and staff on healthy practices, and coordinate health education activities, thus ensuring adherence to the MoE standards,
- ii. NaSIA should support GES to embark on awareness creation campaign in all SHSs to engage the school administration on the importance of adhering to the MoE standards on E&I and
- iii. NaSIA should include in their training of inspectors the issuance of SMART¹¹ recommendations to ensure that schools have relevant and adequate information for planning and implementation purposes.

Management Response (See Appendix I)

42. *Management of NaSIA acknowledged the findings and indicated that they are committed to leveraging these findings to improve educational standards through the expansion of inspection coverage by prioritising their internally generated funds (IGF) to monitor school compliance and formalising data sharing with GES. This according to them will ensure that all inspection data regarding infrastructure and safety risks are shared immediately with the GES Director-General and the Ministry for prioritised budgetary action.*

3.3 NaSIA did not conduct follow-up inspections to identify and sanction defaulting schools.

43. Section 89(2)(b) of the Education Regulatory Bodies Act (ERBA), 2020 (Act 1023) mandates NaSIA to prescribe disciplinary measures for a pre-tertiary education institution that fails to comply with the standards and guidelines issued by the Authority. Also, the Guidelines for the Establishment and Inspection of pre-tertiary educational institutions requires that schools that have not implemented at least 50 percent of the recommendations and have not

¹¹ SMART stands for **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**ealistic and **T**ime-bound.

made any substantial plans towards their implementations will be issued a warning letter with timelines for implementation.

44. We therefore expect NaSIA to conduct follow-up inspections to ascertain the implementation of recommendations given in the initial inspections, issue warning letters with timelines to defaulting schools and to sanction intransigent schools.

45. We noted that NaSIA had inspected six out of the 25 SHSs we visited and made recommendations on the E&I issues as shown in *Table 6*. However, NaSIA did not indicate the timelines for implementing these recommendations in the reports to help them plan for a follow-up.

Table 6: Findings on E&I that required immediate attention.

School	Rating*	E&I Findings	Insp. Date
Amasaman STHS	2.2	Security personnel. Provision of classrooms and furniture.	17-Mar-24
Accra High School	2	The sickbay in the school had no nurse.	26-Mar-24
Presec - La	2	Urgent deployment of additional security personnel to complement the only one on the premises.	05-Apr-24
Kinbu Secondary Technical	2	Urgent deployment of additional security personnel to complement the only one on the premises. Ejection of squatters as they occupy space and pose a threat to security.	06-Apr-24
Presec - Osu	2.2	Urgent deployment of additional security personnel to complement the only one on the premises.	06-Apr-24
Holy Trinity Catholic SHS	2	Roofing of classroom block which was ripped off by rainstorm. Urgent deployment of additional security personnel to complement the only one on the premises	12-Apr-24
Presec – Teshie	2	Urgent deployment of additional security personnel to complement the only one on the premises.	14-Apr-24

Source: NaSIA Whole School Inspection Reports – 2nd Term 2023/2024

* Ratings are 4-Outstanding, 3-Good, 2-Satisfactory and 1 Unsatisfactory. See Appendix G.

46. From Table 6, we noted that NaSIA rated all the inspected SHSs with a score of two (2) and above, indicating satisfactory E&I conditions. However, our visit to six of the schools mentioned in table 8 showed that the identified environment and infrastructure issues that needed to be addressed

immediately, such as dilapidated roofs, falling ceilings, exposed electrical wires in the labs and classrooms, poor waste management practices, unsafe disposal of lab chemicals, and abandoned furniture that could harbour reptiles were still unresolved as of 31 July 2024 (See *Appendix C*). The logbooks of the SHSs we visited did not have any record of NaSIA's follow-up inspections, hence the absence of any warning letters to any of the inspected senior high schools even though they did not implement the given recommendations within the period under consideration.

Figures 5: Conditions of some environment and infrastructure inspected in the SHS



Ceiling with ripped off roof.



Classroom with torn roof at Presec-Teshie



Pile of abandoned furniture at Teshie Presec.



Classroom with deep cracks in wall at Teshie Presec.



Uncollected waste at HOTCASS.



Waste generated left uncollected at Kinbu SHTS.

47. We attribute NaSIA's inability to carry out follow-up inspection to the delay of the ISD to plan and implement follow-up inspections due to inadequate staffing and logistics at the regional offices. Table 7 below shows the logistical and staff strength of the regional offices we visited.

Table 7: Logistical and staff strength of regional offices visited

Region	Director	No. of Staff		Number of SHSs	Number of Vehicles		Office
		Required	At Post		Required	Available	
Ashanti	1	9	6	143	2	1	Yes
Eastern	1	9	2	94	2	0	Yes
Gt Accra	1	9	0	46	2	1	No
Northern	1	9	0	29	2	1	Yes
Western	1	9	0	36	2	1	Yes

Source: Audit Team's compilation from field inspections.

48. Although the environments of the 25 SHSs we visited did not meet the prescribed MoE's E&I standards, NaSIA could not sanction the schools because they did not provide timelines for their return to conduct follow-up inspections and identify the E&I violations.

49. The absence of follow-up inspections and the failure to impose appropriate sanctions by NaSIA have heightened the risk of accidents and

incidents within senior high schools. This concern is evidenced by the clash between Nsutam SHS and Osino Senior High Technical School, which resulted in the tragic loss of one life and injuries to five students, as reported by UTV Ghana and Pulse.com.gh on 20 February 2024. Additionally, the lack of adequate follow-up on fire prevention measures at Ahantaman SHS contributed to a fire outbreak that led to the destruction of students' personal belongings, as reported by the Ghanaian Times on 22 July 2024. These unfortunate incidents were subsequently confirmed by the respective school authorities.

Conclusion

50. NaSIA did not follow up and sanction defaulting SHSs, because the I&S directorate did not plan and follow-up on recommendations in the initial inspection reports.

51. However, NaSIA only provided vague timelines in their recommendation for the schools to correct their anomalies.

Recommendations

52. We recommended that:

- i. NaSIA must complete the setting up of all its regional offices in a timely manner to avert the challenges of school inspections,
- ii. NaSIA must provide timelines for the implementation of recommendations in their inspection reports and
- iii. I&S directorate must plan to provide inspection reports to regional directors for purposes of follow-up inspections.

Management Response (See Appendix I)

53. *Management of NaSIA acknowledged their inability to conduct follow-up inspections to identify and sanction defaulting schools. They however, indicated that they are committed to leverage these findings through the following actions:*

- Regulatory support for sanctions by continuing to push for the passage of its Legislative Instrument (LI) to provide the full legal weight required to enforce sanctions effectively and*
- Strategic resource allocation by prioritizing the strengthening regional offices to improve oversight of schools to serve as advisory body in the midst of scarce resources.*

3.4 Overall Conclusion

54. The National Schools Inspectorate Authority (NaSIA) has not adequately enforced environmental and infrastructure standards to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff in Senior High Schools. This was due to inadequate inspection and reporting systems, which limited the availability of sufficient information on safety issues. In addition, NaSIA did not effectively identify and sanction schools that failed to implement recommendations made to address Environmental and Infrastructure (E&I) deficiencies. Consequently, the safety and welfare of persons in these schools remained at risk.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AND REASONS FOR THE REVIEW.

Document	Reasons for review
Annual School Aggregate Reports 2020 to 2024.	To find the E&I issues identified and the recommendations given by NaSIA.
NaSIA handbook and guidelines on inspections and school establishment. (2020 to 2024) Ministry of Education policies, standards and guidelines.	To compare E&I issues considered during inspections against the indicators in the handbook.
Education Regulatory Bodies Act, 2020 (Act 1023)	To know the mandate, responsibilities and functions of NaSIA and obtain criteria for our assessment.
Monitoring Reports from 2020 to 2024.	To obtain information on monitoring activities carried out and the outcome. To know the schools' compliance level and whether sanctions have been carried out.
Annual work plan from 2020 to 2024.	To compare NaSIA's planned activities against actual performance on school inspection.
List of inspected schools	To know how many schools NaSIA inspected within a period and to enable the team to select schools for inspection.

PERSON INTERVIEWED AND REASONS FOR THE INTERVIEW

Persons Interviewed	Reasons for the interview
Director - Finance	To understand the revenue and budget performance and to gather general information and how operations are funded to achieve set targets.
Deputy Director Inspections and Supervision Division (ISD)	To know why follow-up inspections are not conducted as required and to know whether school inspections are carried out according to laid down procedures
Deputy Director, Research, Monitoring & Evaluation (RM&E)	To clarify issues relating to monitoring of inspectors to ensure the right data was obtained and evaluated to produce inspection report.
Regional Directors	To understand their role in conducting schools' inspection in the region and the reasons for not conducting follow-up inspections.
Inspectors	To find the challenges encountered in carrying out school inspections.

DETAILS OF SOME SHSs INSPECTED BY AUDIT TEAM WHICH NASIA INSPECTED EARLIER

SCHOOL FACILITY	SAFETY					
	Presbyterian SHS - Teshie (B=826, G=866) TT=1,692	Presbyterian SHS - Labadi (B=794, G=746) TT=1,540	Presbyterian SHS - Osu (B=910, G=1032) TT=1,942	Accra High SHS (B=1136, G=1250) TT=2,386	Kinbu SHTS (B=1324, G=603) TT=1,927	HOTCASS (B=556, G=601) TT=1,157
<i>Classrooms</i>	Dilapidated roof Falling ceiling No windows New classroom with warbling columns Rusted iron rods in building. Chemical store in lab has no door. Well lite and ventilated.	Rusted roofing sheets. Buildings leaking. Uncompleted building in use. No chemical store in labs. Well-lit and ventilated.	Uncompleted building in use. Well lite and ventilated.	Uncomplete d building in use. Well-lit and ventilated.	No window leaf or louvres. Inadequate classrooms. Uncompleted building in use.	Dilapidated roof Falling ceiling No windows Poorly lite and ventilated. Inadequate
<i>Fire safety</i>	No fire extinguishers	No fire extinguishers	No fire extinguishers	No fire extinguishers	Expired fire extinguishers	Expired fire extinguishers
Electrical safety	Exposed wires in the labs and classrooms			Naked wires posing danger	Exposed switch and socket wires in the labs and classrooms	Exposed switch and socket wires in the labs and classrooms
<i>Dormitory</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	26 bunker beds 10.8m ² Poor ventilation	n/a	n/a
<i>Security</i>	1 security man Fenced Harassment from thugs.	1 security man Fenced Harassment from thugs.	1 security man Fenced	1 security man Fenced. Harassment from thugs.	1 security man Fenced. Interference from market activities.	1 security man Fenced. Harassment from officers who parked their cars on the premises.
<i>Environment</i>	Weedy, ideal breeding place for reptiles. Heaps of abandoned furniture, may	Heaps of wood, ideal breeding place for reptiles.	Heaps of broken blocks, ideal breeding place for reptiles.	Weedy, ideal breeding place for reptiles.	Kinbu market activities engulf the school.	Heaps of broken chairs and wc, ideal breeding place for reptiles.

SCHOOL FACILITY	SAFETY					
	Presbyterian SHS - Teshie (B=826, G=866) TT=1,692	Presbyterian SHS - Labadi (B=794, G=746) TT=1,540	Presbyterian SHS - Osu (B=910, G=1032) TT=1,942	Accra High SHS (B=1136, G=1250) TT=2,386	Kinbu SHTS (B=1324, G=603) TT=1,927	HOTCASS (B=556, G=601) TT=1,157
	harbor snakes and dangerous reptiles.					
<i>Sickbay</i>	3 beds 1 non-residential nurse.	n/a	Under renovation. Not functioning.	Under renovation. Not functioning.	2 beds 10 cases a day.	n/a
<i>Waste Disposal</i>	Store in bins Picked by waste management companies. Unsafe disposal of expired lab chemicals.	Store in plastic bags Picked by waste management companies. Unsafe disposal of expired lab chemicals.	Weedy waste disposal area. Store in bins Picked by waste management companies.	Store in skip and lifted by waste management companies.	Store in plastic bags and kept under a shed for lifting. Lifts once bi-monthly	Store in plastic bags and kept under a shed for lifting.
<i>Safe Water</i>	No water. Polytanks to store.	Pipe-borne water. Poly tanks to store.	Pipe-borne water. Polytanks to store.	Pipe-borne water. Polytanks to store.	Pipe-borne water. Polytanks to store.	
<i>Catering</i>	registered vendors clean kitchen no fire extinguisher	Vendors in cubicles. registered vendors. Clean environ. no fire extinguisher	registered vendors. no fire extinguisher	Good and neat food preparation areas.	Shed with no floor finish canteen Cook and sell under the shed	Food selling in between classrooms.
<i>Washroom</i>	8 cubicles boys 8 cubicles girls Fairly good	Urinal (2 each). WC squatting (B=7, G=8)	WC squatting (B=8, G=7) Urinal (B=4, G=2)	WCsquatting (B=24, G=4) Open Urinal Open bath Pungent smell	Very dirty 10 cubicles for boys Fairly neat 10 cubicles for females	WC squatting (B=5, G=4)

ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE STANDARDS FOR NaSIA AND MoE.

1. NaSIA

A. Facilities	
1	Adequate Learner Infrastructural Needs: The school must have adequate and quality facilities to fully meet the population and needs of learners.
2	Canteen and Dining Facilities: There are caterers and dining facilities (appropriately located) that are accessible to all learners to ensure the safety and quality of food.
3	Toilet and Urinal Facilities: The school must have adequate and quality toilet and urinal facilities for staff and learners.
4	Classrooms Schools must have adequate and quality support teaching and learning.
5	Facilities Maintenance Schedule (school building, elevator, furniture, etc.): The school must have a maintenance schedule that it regularly adheres to.
B. Environment	
10	Recreational Facilities: The school has facilities that support the intellectual, physical, and emotional development of learners.
11	Beautification/Landscape: The school has a serene atmosphere.
12	Disability-Friendly Environment: All school areas and facilities are accessible to learners with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND), (<i>PwDs ACT 715, 2006</i>).
C. Health & Safety	
13	First Aid Box/Sick Bay: The school has facilities that cater for the immediate health needs of learners and staff.
14	School Health Education Programme (SHEP) Coordinator: The school has a trained SHEP coordinator.
15	Safe Water: The school has reliable sources of safe water.
16	Waste Disposal: The school ensures the safe disposal of both liquid and solid waste.
17	General Safety and Risk: The school takes precautions to reduce danger or harm to learners and teachers in line with available clear safety rules and measures.
D. Fire Safety & Emergency Procedure	
18	Fire Safety: The school has equipment and systems to deal with fire outbreaks.
19	General Security: The school ensures the protection of life and property through established security arrangements.

2. MoE

Health	Safety
Every school shall have adequate First Aid Box / Sick Bay first aid kits, with qualified first aiders (nurses).	There shall be walkways and pavements to all schools. Roads and routes leading to the schools must have the necessary safety measures (speed ramps, marked out zebra crossings, light and sound ambers).
Toilets and urinals facilities shall be available and accessible to all learners.	Every school compound shall be fenced and secured with locks and keys where possible.
Toilets and urinals shall have rough floor surfaces and well ventilated.	Every school compound and playground shall be well maintained and free from any obstacles such as poorly aligned hedges, tree trunks, and open gutters. Where there are boulders or pieces of rocks the area shall be secured with safety fence.
Always provide water and soap at washrooms.	Floor or ground surfaces shall be stable, firm and slip resistant.
Every school shall comply with the health and safety standards of the Ghana Education Service.	Classrooms shall be spacious (to allow movement), and well lighted and ventilated.
Every school shall have potable reliable sources of safe water, cleaned cups and napkins.	Furniture and fixtures in every classroom shall be well arranged and appropriately positioned to ensure safety.
Every school must have a trained SHEP Coordinator.	All electrical wiring in school premises shall be well protected and covered.
Every school must ensure safe disposal of liquid and solid waste.	Secure all doors and windows in schools.
	Use bright markings and bold prints to label places such as laboratories, libraries, classrooms, washrooms etc.
	All school buildings shall have fire escape exits and warning systems (smoke detectors) as well as alarms and fire extinguishers.
	Staff and learners shall know how to operate the alarm system as well as exit school buildings and facilities during emergencies.
	Make notices and signs to caution facility users visible to alert of potential dangers.
	The school shall take precautions to reduce danger or harm to learners and teachers in line with available clear safety rules and measures.
	The school shall have equipment and systems to deal with fire outbreaks, (fire alarms, smoke detectors or fire sprinklers).
	School must ensure the protection of life and property through established security arrangements.
	The school has a maintenance schedule that it regularly adheres to.

INSPECTION PROCESS DESCRIPTION

Overview

Every three years NaSIA carries out inspections on existing schools (public and private) as mandated. The inspection is divided into two parts; A and B. Part A focuses on evaluating schools' academic performance and part B, on evaluating schools' compliance with the Ministry of Education's standards, of which environment and infrastructure practices are a component. The tool used for the inspection is called the Inspection Evaluation Framework (IEF).

The inspection process of the National Schools Inspectorate Authority (NaSIA) follows a structured cycle that begins with the declaration of an inspection, moves through preparation, field inspection, reporting, and ends with dissemination and monitoring. The major stages are Declaration of Inspection stage, Pre-Inspection stage, Inspection stage (The Actual School Visit), and Post-Inspection stage.

Declaration of Inspection

The process begins when the Inspector-General of Schools (IGS) officially declares an inspection. The declaration outlines the reason and purpose of the inspection, specifies the timeframe or period for the inspection, and provides the official mandate for the Authority (NaSIA) and its teams to begin preparations.

Pre-Inspection

The declaration is followed by the pre-inspection which focuses on planning, coordination, and resource mobilisation to ensure that the inspections are conducted in a consistent, transparent, and well-supported manner. At this stage the Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (RM&E) Division develops a concept note that sets out the objectives, scope, and the methodology of the

inspection. The RM&E Team also selects a representative (*sample of schools*) that will be inspected, ensuring alignment with the objectives of the exercise.

Selection of schools

At the beginning of every inspection activity, NaSIA selects schools using purposive sampling strategy with a predetermined sampling frame (See *sampling* below for more details). The sampling frame contains information about the region, district, district code, Education Management Information System (EMIS) code, names of schools, status (private/public), educational level (basic/ secondary/technical/vocational). For example, the sampling frame used for the 2019 school inspection was the list of licensed pre-tertiary educational institutions in Ghana obtained from EMIS and Ghana Education Service (GES) as of April 2019. Selection of schools for inspections was based on NaSIA's annual workplan and the interest of development partners.

Sampling

This is done by the Research Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (RM&E). Schools are considered as the unit of observation and the sampling unit, constituting the sampling frame. The clusters are defined as districts made up of schools. The cluster size (i.e. size of the district) is defined as the number of schools in the cluster. The sampling frame is stratified into 16 regions and private-public schools, giving a total of 32 strata. The stratification ensures that data can be safely disaggregated into regions as well as public-private schools. For each stratum, the sampling is done in two stages. In the first stage, districts are selected using probability proportional to size (PPS), meaning that larger districts have higher probability of selection compared to smaller districts.

In the second stage, a fixed number of schools are selected from each selected district using systematic sampling technique. The number of schools to be selected from each district is fixed to ensure that the PPS is compensated for in the second stage of sampling.

Inspection Panel formation

The Inspection and Supervision Division (ISD), with the approval of the IGS, forms Inspection Panels (IPs) at this stage. Each IP is composed of a Lead Inspector and one or more Team Inspectors and are assigned to specific schools based on the sampling conducted. The IGS then holds a preparatory meeting with inspectors and all relevant divisions of the Authority to explain the purpose and objectives of the inspection. Also, the roles and responsibilities of each inspector as well as the logistics and operational arrangements are discussed and clarified to ensure that inspectors are fully prepared.

Communication to stakeholders and resourcing

Afterwards official letters are sent to all key stakeholders to inform them of the planned inspection. These communications outline the objectives of the inspection and the type of support required from them. Typically, the following stakeholders are notified: Ministry of Education (Office of the Minister), Director-General (Ghana Education Service), regional and district directors of education and the selected schools.

The Administrative Team, with the support of the ISD, then mobilises the necessary resources for the inspection. Beyond logistics, the ISD plays a critical role in forming the inspection panels, supervising field activities, and ensuring timely submission of reports. The ISD, led by its director, reports to the Deputy Inspector-General of Schools – Operations.

The logistics include tablet and laptop tools for data collection and report writing, templates of the one-page summary report formats, Inspector ID cards, Vehicle and protective gear such as Wellington boots and raincoats. This step ensures inspectors are adequately equipped to carry out the inspection effectively.

Inspection (The Actual School Visit)

The inspection stage is the fieldwork phase where inspectors visit the assigned schools and carry out the inspection. Upon arrival at the school the IP organises a Pre-Inspection meeting with school leadership and reiterates the purpose and objectives of the inspection, explains the information they will request from the school and outlines the expectations for cooperation and support expected from the school leadership and staff.

The Inspectors then carry out activities based on the inspection type, which may include interviews with school leadership and other stakeholders, lesson observations (teaching and learning), and compliance inspections (Environment and facilities assessments). Inspection data is collected electronically using tablets and submitted to the designated platform at the end of the inspection exercise.

Supervision

During the inspection, NaSIA assigns Supervision Teams to oversee the inspection process in the field to ensure inspections are conducted in line with established standards and protocols. The presence of the supervision and monitoring team enhances credibility, transparency, and integrity of the inspection process and the data collected.

Key focus areas in supervision and monitoring include *consistency* (ensuring uniform application of procedures and standards across all schools), *validity* (Confirming that collected evidence accurately reflects school realities), *reliability* (ensuring if another team were to conduct the same inspection under similar conditions, the results would remain consistent) and *evidence* (checking that the evidence collected truly reflects what is happening in the school environment).

The monitoring team may shadow inspect panels during school visits, review how electronic tools are used by inspectors for data collection, verify that

inspectors comply with established ethical guidelines and professional codes of conduct and provide on-the-spot guidance to address gaps or inconsistencies observed.

Feedback

After carrying out the inspection activities, the IP organized a post-inspection meeting with school leadership to provide immediate feedback on the inspection which includes key findings, the strengths of the school, areas that require improvement and preliminary recommendations for action. During this meeting, the panel issues a one-page summary report to the school which highlights the strengths observed, the areas needing improvement and the recommendations of the IP.

Post-Inspection

This stage involves reporting, data validation, analysis, quality assurance, dissemination, and follow-up monitoring. This is where the Inspectors prepare detailed school-level inspection reports within a defined timeframe. Each report provides a full account of the inspection, corresponding ratings, the strengths of the school, areas of improvement and recommendations. These reports are sent to the respective schools.

Collation of data, approval and dissemination.

The RM&E Team then validates all inspection data submitted electronically to ensure the data is accurate, properly cleaned, verified and ready for analysis. The team then carries out analysis of the data and produces an aggregate inspection report that summarises key findings and recommendations across all inspected schools.

The Quality Assurance Team (QAT) then reviews the school-level reports prepared by inspectors to ensure accuracy and consistency. Quality assurance takes place at three levels: Initial review by the QAT, secondary review by the Director of ISD and the Deputy Inspector-General of Schools and final review

of a sample by the Inspector-General of Schools, who grants approval for dissemination. The aggregate reports developed by RM&E also undergo the same quality assurance checks.

Once approved, the school-level reports are distributed to the inspected schools, the district and regional education offices in which the inspected schools are located and other relevant Stakeholders. Aggregate reports are disseminated through official fora, where findings and recommendations are presented to stakeholders, and are also published for wider access.

Follow-Up Inspection (Monitoring of implementation)

Based on the inspections, NaSIA periodically assigns panels to follow up on implementation of recommendations. This inspection cycle ensures that inspections are credible, transparent, and effective in driving school improvement.

The Director for Inspection and Supervision carries out follow-up inspections based on the timelines provided in the recommendations of the initial school's inspections. This is to ensure that schools implement recommendations provided in the initial school inspection reports and monitor the progress of inspected schools.

Sampling for follow-up inspections is made from a list of schools that have already been inspected and are expected to implement recommendations provided in the report. The Inspector-General of Schools (IGS) then constitutes Inspection Panels (IPs) and provide resources to them to carry out the follow-up inspection. Recommendations yet to be implemented are the focus of the follow-up inspections, for which the IPs will request for actual and documented evidence.

Warning Letters

After the follow-up inspections, IPs issue an official report to the school on the implementation of the recommendations. Schools that have implemented all recommendations will be re-inspected at a specific time for impact evaluation.

A school that has not implemented at least 50 percent of the recommendations and has not made any substantial plans towards their implementations will be issued a warning letter with timelines for implementation. The defaulting school will be visited after the deadlines given in three warning letters. If the school still fails to comply with the directives in the warning letters, NaSIA will issue sanctions to the defaulting school based on the regulations of the Authority and in consultation with the Minister, and on the advice of the Regional Education directorate or district assembly concerned.

Sanctioning

Sanctions begin after inspected schools refuse to implement recommendations upon a follow-up inspection. Sanctions must be done according to the regulations of the Authority. Sanctions are implemented after NaSIA has issued three warning letters. NaSIA has not enacted its regulations in a Legislative Instrument and therefore specific sanctions cannot be given.

ONE-PAGE SUMMARY REPORT

ONE-PAGE SUMMARY REPORT



National Schools Inspectorate Authority
Enforcing Standards, Ensuring Quality

NAME OF SCHOOL

DATE OF INSPECTION

KEY STRENGTH

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

OFFICIAL

Name of Lead Inspector	Name of Headteacher
Signature	Signature
Date	Date

RATING DETAILS

Table 2: Key to rating (Compliance)

Outstanding	3.50 – 4.00	Exceptionally high quality, above the level at which every school in Ghana is expected to attain.
Good	3.00 – 3.49	The level at which every school in Ghana should attain. Achieving this level of compliance should be a realistic goal for every school.
Satisfactory	2.00 – 2.99	The minimum level of compliance for schools in Ghana. Every school should reach at least this level of compliance in Ghana
Unsatisfactory	1.00 – 1.99	Not at an acceptable level for schools in Ghana.

NUMBER OF SHSs/ PERCENTAGE INSPECTED BY NaSIA IN 2023 AND 2024

Region	Total No. of Schools	2023		2024	
		No. of Schools Inspected by NaSIA	%	No. of Schools Inspected by NaSIA	%
AHAFO	18	0	0%	4	22.2%
ASHANTI	143	0	0%	57	11.2%
BONO	36	0	0%	16	44.4%
BONO EAST	29	0	0%	2	6.9%
CENTRAL	75	0	0%	23	30.7%
EASTERN	94	6	6.4%	43	45.7%
G. ACCRA	46	7	15.2%	22	47.8%
NORTHEAST	14	0	0%	4	28.6%
NORTHERN	29	0	0%	17	58.6%
OTI	25	3	12%	3	12%
SAVANNAH	13	0	0%	6	46.2%
UPPER EAST	35	0	0%	16	45.7%
UPPER WEST	32	0	0%	22	68.8%
VOLTA	68	15	22.1%	9	13.2%
WESTERN	36	0	0%	7	19.4%
WESTERN NORTH	19	0	0%	3	15.8%
Grand Total	712	31	4.4%	254	35.7%

REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF SHSs

REGION	TOTAL NO. OF SCHOOLS	%	REGION	TOTAL NO. OF SCHOOLS	%
Ashanti	143	20.1	Upper West	32	4.5
Eastern	94	13.2	Bono East	29	4.1
Central	75	10.5	Northern	29	4.1
Volta	68	9.6	Oti	25	3.5
G. Accra	46	6.5	W. North	19	2.7
Bono	36	5.1	Ahafo	18	2.5
Western	36	5.1	Northeast	14	2.0
Upper East	35	4.9	Savannah	13	1.8
Grand Total				712	100

Source: List of SHSs In Ghana from RM&E, NaSIA as at August 2024.

COST OF INSPECTION PER SCHOOL

NATIONAL SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE AUTHORITY			
COST OF INSPECTION PER SCHOOL			
INSPECTION PANEL	RATE	NO. OF DAYS	TOTALS GH ₵
Lead Inspector	350.00	1	350.00
2 Team Inspectors	700.00	1	700.00
Driver	210.00	1	210.00
Fuel*(Variable)	400.00	1	400.00
Other Costs:			-
Vehicle Maintenance Cost/Day	41.00	1	41.00
Data & Call Credit for Inspectors	40.00	1	40.00
Stationery & Revised Handbook for Schools Inspection	50.00	1	50.00
Analysis of Data	280.00	1	280.00
Supervision And Monitoring	350.00	1	350.00
Other Costs: Post Inspection			-
Report Writing	280.00	1	280.00
Quality Assurance	280.00	1	280.00
Printing of Provisional License & Reports	20.00	1	20.00
Follow-up Processes	350.00	1	350.00
SUB-TOTAL			3,351.00
TOTAL COST			3,351.00



National Schools Inspectorate Authority
Enforcing Standards, Ensuring Quality

NaSIA/MoE/25/12/01

3rd December, 2025.

**The Auditor General
Ghana Audit Service
Accra.**

Dear Sir;

**SUBMISSION OF REPONSE TO MANAGEMENT LETTER ON PERFORMANCE AUDIT OF
THE AUDITOR GENERAL ON ENFORCEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND
INFRASTRUCTURE STANDARDS IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS**

I forward herewith, the Management Response to the Management letter on the Performance Audit of the National Schools Inspectorate Authority (NaSIA) for your attention.

Counting on your cooperation.

**PROF. TAHIRU SALIFU AZEKO
INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF SCHOOLS**

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MANAGEMENT RESPONSE: PERFORMANCE AUDIT ON ENFORCEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE STANDARDS

Institutional & Technical Clarifications

Before addressing the specific findings, the Authority (NaSIA) provides the following corrections to the audit's historical and institutional context:

1. Historical Accuracy (Ref: Ch 2.1)

The National Inspectorate Board (NIB) was not an independent agency but functioned as a division under the Ghana Education Service (GES).

2. Divisional Mandates (Ref: Ch 2.2, Item 19)

The mandate described in Item 19 pertains to the Inspections and Supervision Division of the Authority, not the Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation (RM&E) Division.

3. Statutory Functions (Ref: Ch 2.3, Item 22 B & C)

The functions listed under items 22 B and C are not statutory functions of the Authority as stipulated in the Education Regulatory Bodies Act, 2020 (Act 1023).

4. Funding (Ref: Ch.2.5)

The Authority's inspection activities over the period 2020-2023 focused on Basic Schools Inspections.

The total amounts of GHS53.68m and GHS38.00m quoted in the Management Letter represents the summary of the Authority's IGF and GoG budgeted and actual amounts covering the period 2020-2023 for the administration and operations of the Authority. These amounts include Compensation of Employees, Goods and Services, and Capital Expenditure. The breakdown is as indicated in the table below.

CLASSIFICATION	BUDGET	ACTUAL
Compensation of Employees		
GoG	11,871,802.81	6,726,103.10
Goods and Services		
GoG	2,700,000.00	979,249.21
IGF	22,693,809.68	26,366,803.46
CAPEX		
IGF	18,972,758.00	2,044,787.06
Total	56,238,370.49	36,116,942.83

In the year 2020, the authority budgeted for an amount of GHS1,059,452.00 under GoG and received GHS754,304.00 for both compensation of employees and goods and service. There was no budget for IGF because the Act 1023 which established the Authority was passed in 2020. The Authority began its IGF collection in 2021.

The Authority received a total sum of GHS20,769,949.21 between 2021 – 2024 from its donor partners to conduct inspections in pre-tertiary institutions. Out of this amount, GHS19,330,603.21 was used to conduct Inspections at the Basic School Level, and GHS1,439,346.00 was used for Inspections at the SHS level in 2023 and 2024 in 278 Schools.

1. Positive Findings (Successes and Efforts)

The audit acknowledges the foundational work NaSIA had performed to create regulatory environment.

A. Establishment of Regulatory Framework

Recognition of NaSIA's successful creation of legal and operational frameworks required by Act 1023. (Ref: Ch 2.2 & 2.3).

B. Development of Inspection Tools

Credit for the Inspection Evaluation Framework (IEF), which provides a structured methodology for assessing school safety and infrastructure. (Ref: Ch 2.7),

C. Ongoing School Registration

Significant progress in capturing schools within a centralized regulatory database for improved oversight. (Ref: Ch 3.1).

2. Negative Findings (Gaps and Challenges) & Management Response

The Authority provides the following context and specific management actions regarding the gaps identified:

A. Inadequate Periodic Monitoring (Ref: Ch 3.4)

- **Management Response:** Monitoring frequency is heavily dependent on available funding, as most public-school inspections are project-funded. To bridge this gap, the Authority is utilizing its own Internally Generated Funds (IGF) to support the inspection of public SHS/SHTS, specifically to evaluate compliance with set environmental and infrastructure standards. While NaSIA successfully inspected 225 public schools in the last quarter of 2025 using these internal resources, external support is urgently needed to enable the Authority to inspect all 716 Senior High Schools in Ghana.

B. Failure to Apply Sanctions (Ref: Ch 3.5)

- **Management Response:** The primary challenge in enforcing legal sanctions is the absence of a finalized Legislative Instrument (LI). Furthermore, since public schools are government-owned and managed by GES, NaSIA shares detailed school-level reports with GES at both national and sub-national levels. The Authority maintains that GES holds the implementation mandate to ensure these government schools comply with our recommendations.

C. Limited Geographical Presence and Staffing (Ref: Ch 2.6)

- **Management Response:** Although NaSIA has a presence at the national and regional levels, staffing and logistical challenges limit the frequency of monitoring in remote areas. We are working to resolve these staffing issues to ensure more consistent school visits.

D. Lack of Coordination with GES (Ref: Ch 4.2)

- **Management Response:** NaSIA has intensified its collaboration with the GES in the latter part of this year. The Authority is working closely with GES to ensure our recommendations are adopted; however, the speed of implementation is often tied to the availability of government funds to address specific infrastructure deficits.

3. Recommendations & Management Action Plan

NaSIA is committed to leveraging these findings to improve educational standards through the following actions:

A. Expanding Inspection Coverage (Ref: Ch 5.1)

NaSIA will continue to prioritize its own IGF to monitor school compliance. However, to achieve 100% coverage of the 716 SHS/SHTS, we are advocating for increased budgetary support from the Government of Ghana and Development Partners.

B. Regulatory Support for Sanctions (Ref: Ch 5.2)

NaSIA is continuing to push for the passage of its Legislative Instrument (LI) to provide the full legal weight required to enforce sanctions effectively.

C. Strategic Resource Allocation (Ref: Ch 5.4)

NaSIA is prioritizing the strengthening of its regional offices to improve oversight of schools to serve as advisory body as resources become available.

D. Formalized Data Sharing with GES (Ref: Ch 5.3)

NaSIA is refining our feedback loops to ensure all inspection data regarding infrastructure and safety risks are shared immediately with the GES Director General and the Ministry for prioritized budgetary action.

In conclusion, management is grateful to the audit team for their constant engagement and feedback.

Management would ensure the implementation of the recommendations as enumerated in the management letter for the improvement in standards in all pre-tertiary institutions in the country.

MISSION STATEMENT

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