



LfL Ghana Newsletter

Leadership for Learning Ghana Programme

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Editorial

The Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) of the University of Cape Coast is committed to improving school leadership at the pre-tertiary level specifically the basic school level. It is convinced that school leadership is meaningless unless it is linked directly to pupils/students' learning. The IEPA will continue to collaborate with Ghana Education Service (GES) to strengthen the capacity of school level leadership as well as circuit supervision.

To promote efficiency at Metro, Municipal and District levels, the IEPA purposes to organize leadership for learning professional development programmes necessary for equipping Metropolitan/Municipal/District Directors with skills for coping with challenges associated with decentralization in the country.

The IEPA appreciates the continued support it receives from the Center for Commonwealth Education (CCE), University of Cambridge and specifically Professor John MacBeath and Sue Swaffield.

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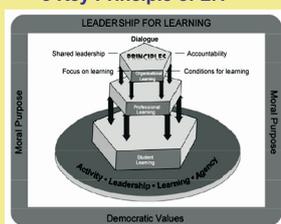
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LfL News Metropolitan/Municipal/District Directors of Education attend LfL Workshop

A two day leadership for learning workshop aimed at creating a shared learning platform for Metropolitan/Municipal/District Directors of Education to dialogue on ways of strengthening school level leadership for learning capacity in their Metropolis/Municipalities/Districts was organized at Windy Lodge Hotel, Winneba on the 16th and 17th February, 2011. The workshop is one of the strategies for fulfilling the spirit underlying the July 22, 2009 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the Ghana Education Service (GES), the Commonwealth Education Trust (CET) and the University of Cape Coast (UCC), in which the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) was mandated to strengthen the Leadership for Learning (LfL) capacity of primary school headteachers in the country. The theme for the workshop was *Promoting the quality of learning through effective leadership support*.

A total of 64 Metropolitan/Municipal/District Directors of Education attended the workshop. This number included 3 national executive members of the Conference of Directors of Education (CODE) and 6 selected directors from each of the 10 regions of Ghana.

The opening ceremony of the workshop was chaired by Professor Mawutor K. Avoke, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, University of Education, Winneba. The following dignitaries were also present at the



Dr. Oduro addressing participants

- Mr. S. Adu (*Director, Basic Education, GES*)
- Dr. G. K. T. Oduro (*Director, IEPA*)
- Dr. G. Kankam (*Dir., Center for Education Policy Studies, UEW*)
- Dr. F. Mensah (*Representing the Dean, Faculty of Education, UCC*)
- Ms Ivy Mawuko (*SNV Ghana*)
- Prof (Emeritus) John MacBeath (*University of Cambridge*)
- Dr. Sue Swaffield (*University of Cambridge*)
- Dr. A. Dare (*Professional Development Leader (PDL)*)
- Dr. (Mrs) Rosemary Bosu, (*Professional Development Leader (PDL)*)
- Mrs. Juliana Ohene (*Professional Development Leader (PDL)*)
- Rev. Kodwo Arko-Boham, (*Professional Development Leader (PDL)*)
- Dr. A. Ampah-Mensah (*LfL Programme Coordinator*)

MESSAGE FROM

Chairman of the Conference of Directors of Education (CODE)

I am very happy to be associated with the Leadership for Learning programme in Ghana. The programme is very relevant and useful to the Ghanaian headteacher. This is because it seeks to develop the leadership capacity of basic school headteachers to connect their leadership with the overall learning experience in the schools.

Most often, various interventions that are put in place to improve the quality of education in the country fail to tap the expertise and inputs of Metropolitan/Municipal/District Directors of Education who offer support to and also supervise the implementers on the ground. As such, directors are usually left to guess the exact details of such programmes. It is in this light that CODE appreciates the effort of IEPA to organize LfL workshop for its members in February 2011. We are now committed and better informed to offer the necessary support to headteachers to connect their school level leadership to pupil, professional and organizational learning in the school. We therefore ask that IEPA increases its efforts to organize another workshop for other members of CODE who did not have the opportunity to attend the February workshop.

(Continued on page



*Mr. George Jerry Hanson
(Chairman, CODE)*



*Suseela interacting with Circuit Supervisors at
Asuogyaman District Education Office*

Prof. Suseela Malakolunthu visits LfL Ghana

Professor Suseela Malakolunthu, an associate professor at the Dept. of Educational Management, Planning and Policy of the Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, Malaysia visited the Leadership for Learning Ghana network to undertake an evaluatory research. The research was commissioned by the Centre for Commonwealth Education (CCE) as part of Professor Malakolunthu's visit to the University of Cambridge as a visiting scholar.

During her visit, Professor Malakolunthu interacted with some directors of education, circuit supervisors; school heads (STLs) and teachers, parents and school management committee members. She also interacted with some professional development leaders (PDLs) and the academic staff of the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) of the University of Cape Coast.

Professor Malakolunthu visited Adjena United Primary School and Akosombo Presby Primary School in the Asuogyaman district of the Eastern Region, Saaman Berase D/A Basic School in the Komenda Edina Eguafu Abirem (KEEA) municipality of the Central Region and Sakumono School Complex 2 Primary and Kindergarten in the Tema Metropolis of the Greater Accra Region.

Message from CODE chairman *(continued from page 1)*

CODE is also aware of other educational leadership training models in the country. These different models sometimes confuse headteachers. It is our wish that IEPA could initiate dialogue with other stakeholders to harmonise these leadership training modules so as to benefit our education system.

It is also the wish of CODE that the Ghana Education Service will liaise with IEPA for future workshops of this nature which go to strengthen the capacities of both the Directors and Heads of schools.

Directors at LfL workshop *(continued from page 1)*

Professor Avoke stressed that quality learning had made the role of leadership critical. He challenged all present to think about innovative ways of translating such indicators of schooling like access and enrolment into quality outcomes. Prof. Avoke was happy that the LfL programme was not being treated as a University programme but rather as a national one. He commended the composition of the LfL Ghana team and also thanked the Cambridge partners for the programme.

Dr. George K.T. Oduro emphasised that unless leadership and supervision at the school and circuit levels were strengthened, achieving quality in education and especially in the school would continue to be a challenge. He acknowledged the critical role that directors of education played in influencing educational policy formulation and implementation. Dr. Oduro noted that it was necessary that directors were drawn closer to initiatives that dwelt on issues concerning quality in our education sector.

The National President of CODE, Mr. George Jerry Hanson was grateful to the IEPA for the recognition given to the CODE by organising the workshop for its members. He was critical of the numerous uncoordinated headteacher leadership development programmes in the country. He said the practice had the potential of confusing headteachers as to which ones to adopt and use. Mr. Hanson therefore pleaded with IEPA to liaise with GES to find ways of harmonising the various leadership development modules in the education system.

Mr. Stephen Adu, Director in Charge of Basic Education opened the workshop on behalf of the acting Director-General, Ms Naana Biney. In the opening address read on her behalf, Ms. Biney reiterated the GES' commitment to the LfL programme. She intimated that the GES had in collaboration with the IEPA trained over 1000 headteachers and circuit supervisors in leadership for learning. Ms. Biney said that although the LfL training workshops for headteachers were contributing positively to the GES' quality school leadership agenda, strategies for organising such workshops without taking headteachers out of school during

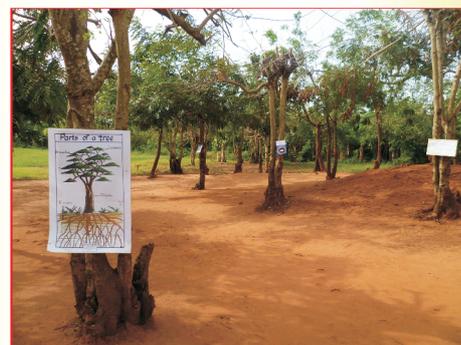
Spotlight – Talking trees of Adjena United Basic School

Adjena United Primary School is in Adjena, a farming community in the Asuogyaman District of the Eastern Region. It was founded in 1962 out of the understanding between the Methodist and Presbyterian Regional Managers of Education. Before 1962, there were two separate schools – Adjena Methodist Primary and Adjena Presbyterian Primary, both located at Old Adjena; where the Akosombo Dam currently is. When the people of Old Adjena were resettled at New Adjena, the two schools encountered infrastructural difficulties and were consequently merged to become Adjena United Primary School. By the new arrangement, the Presbyterian Education Unit is responsible for the management of the school while the Methodist Unit provides the head of school.

Adjena United Primary School is headed by Mr. Patrick Akwah, a School Transformational Leader (STL). Mr. Akwah is very particular about the

relationship between the two Lfl principles - learning environment and focus on learning. Mr. Akwah, together with his staff and management take advantage of every opportunity to create an environment in the school that has a focus on pupils learning. To this end, they have created an environment such that even when children are playing around the school compound, they have an opportunity to learn something.

There are lots of trees on the school compound. On these trees are pasted posters of educational content. Some



to the headmaster, they paste the materials on the trees every morning and remove them when school closes. This is to preserve the materials against the effects of the weather.

The informational materials are so placed that pupils will see and talk about them as they play or walk around the school compound. Some of the content on the posters are animals that live in water, parts of a tree and a quiz on the history of Ghana. Indeed, at Adjena United primary School, trees can also talk.

Reflections of an STL – Patrick K. Akwah, Adjena United Primary School

Since I was introduced to the leadership for learning (Lfl) programme a year and half ago, my leadership, managerial, supervisory and administrative skills have never remained the same. With the knowledge and skills acquired, I now do proper planning and thorough preparation before discharging my duties.

After attending the workshop, I was motivated to infest everyone around me with the Lfl principles. Through education, I was able to bring all stakeholders (teachers, pupils, school management committee (SMC) members, parent teacher association (PTA)) on board. I organize regular in-service training for my staff, PTA/SMC meetings, school worship and other education fora where I highlight the Lfl principles.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The journey has not been smooth but with perseverance and “can do it” attitude we have chalked a lot of success both measurable and immeasurable.

One year after implementing the Lfl concept the pupils’ reading ability has improved. The reading test conducted by the District Education Office revealed an

in 2009 and 2010 this increased to 27 percent and 38 percent respectively.

Through regular INSETS, teachers have also improved upon their practice. The number of class exercises and project or homework has been stepped up, and the group method of teaching has been found to be more suitable by the teachers and have been adopted. This offers the weak pupils the opportunity to learn from their colleagues who are brighter. The good students also get the opportunity to express themselves through explanations and discussions that they lead in their various groups.

The learning environment has also witnessed massive improvement, in that the classrooms can now speak for themselves as the walls are now beaming with more pictures and charts. The trees in the school apart from providing shade have also been transformed into learning spots where they carry information for pupils to learn even at ‘break’.

The SMC/PTA has also been drawn closer to the school than before through regular meetings. This has resulted in major

serves as the foundation level.

Within the one and half years, the school has been able to link up with an (NGO) International Fraternity For Assistance and Development (IFAD) which provided the school with some computers and a tutor to take care of our ICT lessons in order to boost the teaching of ICT in the school.

CHALLENGES

In spite of our modest achievements, we still have to grapple with a number of challenges. As a rural school, about 85% of our pupils stay with their grandparents whilst their real parents are in the cities and towns in pursuit of white collar jobs and greener pastures. Parental control becomes difficult. Adolescent pupils rather control their aged grandparents and this leads to high numbers of indiscipline cases both at home and the school.

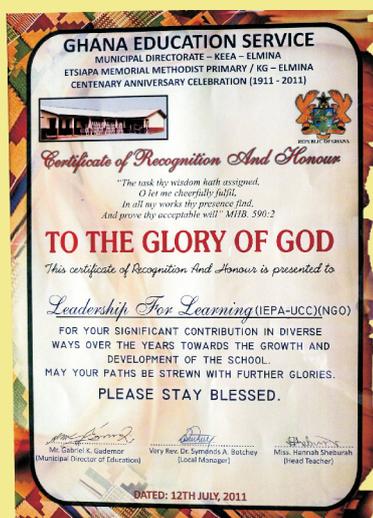
Most parents and guardians of our pupils are illiterates who instead of encouraging and supervising pupils to do their homework or learn after classes rather engage them in economic activities like hawking, firewood fetching and farming after classes.



"AUNTIE AMMA"

Etsiapa Memorial Methodist Primary and Kindergarten School holds Centenary

Etsiapa Memorial Methodist Primary and Kindergarten School at Elimina in the Komenda/Edina/Eguafo/Abrem Municipality of the Central Region held its hundredth anniversary at the school's premises on 12th July, 2011. The school is one of the LfL schools in the municipality. LfL Ghana was presented with a certificate of honour and recognition at the celebrations.



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APPLYING THE LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING (LFL) PRINCIPLES: SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE VRA PRESBY PRIMARY SCHOOL, AKOSOMBO: FLORENCE MINTA ABOAGYE (MRS) "AUNTIE AMMA"

May I register my sincerest thanks and profound gratitude to the IEPA/University of Cambridge for the training I received and for preparing me to introduce the Leadership for Learning Concept in my school.

I am delighted to impart to colleague headteachers and my own teaching staff new skills, especially managerial and supervisory skills that I have acquired from the various training sessions that we attended at Ajumako and Saltpond respectively. Since 2009, we have been practicing LfL in my school, VRA Presby Primary, Akosombo. This has led to a marked improvement in the school's administration and relationship with the community. A sense of ownership now prevails in the school community as the school now works in partnership with parents. Dialogue is encouraged and parents now take keen interest in what happens in the school.

Pupils, teachers, members of the community and other key players are now aware of the roles that they must play to support the school authorities to improve pupil learning in the school. I am happy to announce that we are already reaping the benefits. Results of the recent reading skills organised by the District Directorate of Education showed a marked improvement in the performance of our pupils.

A learning culture is also developing gradually in the school. Focus on Learning is seen in various ways. Teachers review their teaching methodology regularly to ensure that pupils' interests, aptitudes and special needs are catered for. There is a systematic programme in place to improve teaching and learning by intensifying supervision, monitoring, observation through brief classroom visits by the Headmistress who then provides feedback on teacher performance.

My teachers, as matter of policy now provide feedback on pupils' performance in their various classrooms. This strategy is helping pupils to develop interest in their learning activities. There are plans to reintroduce School Performance Appraisal Meetings (SPAM) with the community. Pupils have begun seeing learning as an activity, habits are changing. Self awareness, commitment and confidence are reshaping the lives of our pupils.

Regular school-based in-service training programmes have improved teachers' skills. Sharing of experiences and knowledge is improving the learning environment.

The Leadership for Learning experience in my school has actually changed the tone and climate of my school. A new school culture is thus evolving, which I believe will soon impact positively on the performance of both pupils and teachers in my school

Patrick K. Akwah, Adjena United Primary School (continued from page 3)

Other Challenges include:

Frequent leaving of teachers for further studies in order to escape the rural environment and its challenges.

Delay in the release of government capitation grant makes management difficult.

Difficulties in getting parents to meet as most of them are peasant farmers and aged. They are only available on taboo days.

Chieftaincy dispute had also been one of the serious challenges. Money that could have been used for development projects in the school is being expended on chieftaincy litigation and most of the chiefs and elders in the community stay in the towns and cities and come down occasionally.

MANAGEMENT OF CHALLENGES

So far, education has been the channel through which most of our challenges are being managed. We talk to parents at PTA/SMC meetings about the benefits of education and the dangers involved when one refuses to give proper education to a child.

There has been incessant appeals to parents to make some time available to meet and think about their children's education since the land on which they are farming is depleting in nutrients and the fish stock in their rivers is also reducing, and their children will learn modern trends of farming and fishing at school which will help improve upon their practice in future.

We also appeal through our Circuit Supervisors and District Directors to constantly prompt government to release the Capitation Grant on time.

CONCLUSION

Indeed, the exposure to leadership for learning has truly made me a "School Transformational Leader" (STL).

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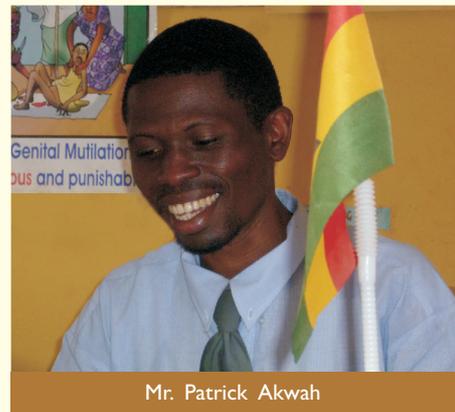
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