



LfL Ghana Newsletter

Leadership for Learning Ghana Programme

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Editorial

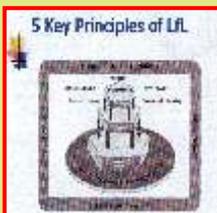
This edition is dedicated to school transformational leaders (STLs) to share their experiences in applying the Leadership for Learning principles in the day to day administration of their schools. We believe that STLs have varied experiences that we all can learn from.

This Newsletter therefore provides a platform for STLs to tell their stories. The content of contributions vary, ranging from STLs own understanding of the principles, how they have applied them, the successes chalked up and the challenges they have faced in implementing the principles and how they are managing the challenges.

It is refreshing to know that after participating in LfL workshops, the STLs feel more empowered to take reasonable risks to improve on the general performance of their schools. Enjoy reading it.

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A Report on the Impact of LfL in Zeroga Primary School, Zebilla in the Bawku West District of the Upper East Region of Ghana - Moses Aguri

After the April, 2010 LfL workshop at Saltpond, there has been tremendous improvements in my school; thanks to the application of the knowledge and skills acquired in Leadership for Learning.

In the first place, the headteacher and staff used dialogue to mobilise PTA/community members to contribute foodstuff to prepare lunch for pupils for one full year. With this effort put up by community members, the headteacher presented a termly report to the district assembly and the Member of Parliament for the area and recommended that the school be put on the Government of Ghana's School Feeding Programme (GSFP). Lo and behold, in September, 2011, due to the positive outcome of the community initiated school feeding programme in the school, the assembly approved that the school should be included in GSFP.

In addition, by sharing the requisite skills and knowledge acquired from LfL with my teachers, they are now conversant with lesson notes preparation and delivery with a focus on learning. As recognition for this effort, I (headteacher) was awarded as the second best teacher in the district for the 2010 academic year for which I was presented with a 21 inch television set and a certificate.

In an attempt to create conducive environment for effective learning, the headteacher and staff applied to Ghana Cement (GHACEM) foundation for support to construct a three classroom block. They responded positively by providing cement to construct the block. This initiative was welcomed by the district assembly who took up the cost of constructing the building. Children now enjoy new classrooms for teaching and learning.

Indeed, the programme supported me as a headteacher in monitoring and supervising my teachers' and pupils' performance in the classroom to ensure effective use of facilities in the school. With the skills and knowledge acquired from the LfL training workshops, I have been able to implement the five principles, thereby creating an enabling environment for effective teaching and learning.

Furthermore, the principle of dialogue was judiciously used by the headteacher and staff to bring interpersonal cordial relationship between the community and the school.

The community members now pay regular visits to the school to interact with staff freely on ways to move the school forward. Teachers also take active part in community projects such as the building of toilets, clinics etc. Also, teachers now pay visits to pupils' homes to interact with parents. Parents also motivate teachers with incentive packages to boost teaching and learning in the school.



Moses A. Aguri

On the other hand, there are some few challenges one of which is the inability of some parents to contribute their quota to sustain the community initiated feeding programme. Thankfully, the school is now on the GSFP. Also, during the construction of the 3-classroom block, some 'hard-hearted' people deliberately refused to offer a helping hand.

In conclusion, I would appeal to the Leadership for Learning Ghana programme to extend LfL training to all headteachers and stakeholders in education in the country. Also, regional and district coordinators should be appointed to oversee and support LfL activities in their respective areas to raise educational standards in the country to match modern and international standards.

Practicing Leadership for Learning at Kassmiya E/A Primary School - Natogmah Yussif

Leadership for learning is really our hope. It is crucial for learning and supervision in our schools. I feel very privileged to be one of the first set of headteachers who were selected for the LfL capacity building programme.

Indeed, the programme supported me as a headteacher in monitoring and supervising my teachers' and pupils' performance in the classroom to ensure effective use of facilities in the school.

With the skills and knowledge acquired from the LfL training workshops, I have been able to implement the five principles, thereby creating an enabling environment for effective teaching and learning.

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Natogmah Yussif

Leadership for Learning in Action - Mrs Susana Marian Holdbrook, Ghana National Basic School, Cape Coast

I was privileged to be part of this important programme – Leadership for Learning (Lfl) from 24th August – 11th September, 2010 at GESDI, Ajumako and 19th – 30th April, 2011 at GES Training Centre, Saltpond, of which I have not regretted to represent the Cape Coast metropolis.

The workshop has improved my managerial skills as an administrator and a role model in the community. The training has motivated me to be an action-oriented school head by practicing the five principles of Lfl. I now look at my school as my personal property and as such do all I can to enhance its image. I have been able to lobby for five electrical poles and accessories to the school. This was achieved through the effort of all stakeholders in the school. We are continuing with our efforts to rope in more community members to be part of any project undertaken by the school.

In trying to build a conducive atmosphere in the school, teachers are encouraged to be united. This helps them to focus on learning to impart knowledge and also contribute to other co-curricular activities.

As a consequence of implementing Lfl in my school, we now work as a team. We are each others' critical friend. We dialogue, share responsibilities and account for whatever duties that are assigned to us. Through these practices, the school was awarded 'Best institution into farming' in the Cape Coast metropolis during the district/regional farmers' day held at Twifo Hemang Lower Denyira District in 2010. The Junior High School girls also won a trophy during the Inter-Schools Athletics Competition in 2011 held at the Mfantshipim School Park due to the collective efforts (teamwork) of all stakeholders.

Because of the benefits that I have derived from the Lfl programme, I seize the least opportunity to talk about the importance of the programme to colleague headteachers and other stakeholders of education that I encounter. I strongly suggest that Lfl should be introduced to and embraced by all to help transform our future leaders to be the best they can ever be.



Edmund S. Addo

Edmund's Success Story: Salvation Army Primary, 'B' Kade

The knowledge gained through the Lfl programme has really equipped and strengthened my supervisory and managerial roles as a headteacher. I introduced my teachers to the principles of Lfl and discussed the principles during SMC/PTA meetings.

Due to the skills acquired, I no longer tick lesson notes but vet them thoroughly and discuss weaknesses and encourage strengths promptly. Also, the relationship between my teachers and I has improved and teachers can now approach me on challenges they face in the classroom and beyond. In fact, their welfare is now my concern.

Through Lfl, I now feel that the school is my private business. I therefore go the extra mile to solicit for support to improve my school. I have been able to lobby the District Assembly for forty bags of cement for the JHS classroom floors, and doors and windows were also provided to enhance effective teaching and learning.

Amazingly, due to good managerial skills I exhibited and the rapid development of my school after participating in Lfl training, the district directorate has added another stream previously under a different headteacher to my school to manage. This is because the population of that school was decreasing due to poor attitude of teachers towards work.

Moreover, because of the way I run my school, using dialogue effectively, a headteacher who was demoted due to poor management of school funds was posted to my school to learn from our way of doing things and be reformed.

*Kudos to IEPA, the Lfl programme is
yielding massive results.*

My school is now a Learning Site!



Mrs. Susana Marian Holdbrook

DIALOGUE: A STRATEGIC TOOL FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT - Alhassan Abubakari, Kpong Tamale Experimental Junior High School.

The five principles of Leadership for Learning are interlinked. I have come to the realization that one of them cannot be singularly implemented without the others. But there is one that makes the rest more visible and more functional. That is the principle of dialogue.

Through dialogue stakeholders can resolve to:

- *Remain focused on effective learning
- *Create favorable conditions for effective learning
- *Share responsibilities and execute them according to plan
- *And finally account for their stewardship

Dialogue is a very useful tool in the school management process. It brings all hands on deck to support the development of the school.

Dialogue addresses academic, social and health related issues (for example, teachers welfare, classroom accommodation and sitting arrangements, sanitation etc.) in the school. If we all resort to the effective use of this tool (dialogue) we will be making greater changes in our school. Thanks to the Lfl programme for making us see things through a different lens.



Alhassan Abubakari

Shared Leadership and Accountability: My Perspective in Our Context - Isaac Mepenedo (Headteacher) Saaman-Berese Basic School, KEEA District

The five main principles of leadership for learning cannot be dealt with in isolation as far as quality leadership for quality learning is concerned. The five principles relate closely to each other. However, I want to put shared leadership and accountability into perspective and briefly analyse them in our context as Ghanaian basic school headteachers or leaders.

Shared leadership has to do with situations where leadership roles are consciously and reasonably distributed among all stakeholders of education like teachers, pupils and parents.

In this sense, everybody is given the opportunity to bring their leadership skills to bear in an effort towards the attainment of a common goal. Shared accountability on the other hand seeks to commit every member of the team to be answerable to all action and inactions in the school. Here, successes/failures and profits/losses of the school are opened and equally shared among all members of the organisation (school). These two principles mentioned above complement each other as far as the leadership roles of headteachers are concerned. It is worth noting that, the much talked about leadership roles are geared towards achieving quality teaching and learning.

It is important to acknowledge that, there can never be proper share of leadership roles in our schools without proper shared sense of accountability. Thus, reasonable amount of openness, trust, transparency and proper practice of democracy yield an equal amount of motivation, belongingness and above all commitment to duty. In other words, as much as teachers and pupils, for instance know where the school is coming from, where it is and where it is going, they would definitely put all hands on deck to push it to its desirable destination.



I have come to observe after the LfL programme that, the leaders' (headteachers') ability to practice shared accountability and shared leadership as principles provides the following advantages:

- * They make the leader's work very flexible
- * They make the leader's work less burdensome
- * They enable the school to keep running well even in the absence of the headteacher
- * They serve as a motivating factor to all team members
- * They make the leader feel at ease at work
- * They create the right atmosphere for teaching/learning
- * They give the leader moral courage to correct others when need be

In order to enjoy all the above stated benefits, and many more others in our schools as leaders, there is the need for us to play an active part in the whole implementation process of LfL rather than being passive. That is to say that, there is the need to be a little more committed, selfless and hardworking rather than sitting down in the office expecting things to happen.

This is much linked to Leadership for Learning in Ghana as a whole. There is the necessity for us not to see the programme as somebody's project to be implemented; instead, we have to embrace the programme and see it as a helping hand being offered to us to enable us realise our goal of providing good quality education for our own quality future.

Practicing Leadership for Learning at Kassmiya E/A Primary School (Continued from pg.1)

When I returned from the Saltpond workshop, I organized an INSET for my teachers on the five principles. I implemented the LfL principles by encouraging team work, transparency, accountability and shared responsibilities. There is now free flow of information, cordial relationship between teachers, pupils and the headteacher.

With the benefit from the LfL training, I liaised with the District Assembly and some NGO's to support the school. So far, CAMFED, a Non - Governmental Organisation, has supported the school with some furniture to improve the condition of teaching and learning.

Indeed, it is gratifying to note that after I had taken my teachers through the principles of leadership for learning, they now carefully and thoroughly prepare before going to teach. This practice has gone a long way to improve effective teaching and learning. Teachers now focus on what the pupils are actually learning and look out for evidence of learning.

In recognition of the potency of the LfL programme, one of my staff members stated that 'the LfL programme should not be limited to headteachers, it should go down to the classroom teachers. We are destroying the pupils who pass through our hands'. Fortunately with the little that I have learnt, I am impacting positively on my teachers and other

headteachers around me. I thank those concerned in organizing and bringing this programme to Ghana.

If all headteachers are introduced to and encouraged to implement the LfL principles in their schools, it will help to promote not only teaching and learning but also supervision and evaluation to ensure that inputs in education are not wasted but are effectively and efficiently used for the set goals. I therefore will plead with District Assemblies and District Directors of Education to support STLs in their districts (with the help of PDLs in the regions) to roll out the LfL programme in every District.

Natogmah Yussif



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Leadership for Learning Successful Practice Sharing Conference Held in Tamale and Winneba

As part of its monitoring, evaluation and professional support strategy, the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA), University of Cape Coast in collaboration with the Centre for Commonwealth Education (CCE), University of Cambridge organized a successful practice sharing conference for LfL headteachers and circuit supervisors. The theme for the conference was Enhancing Quality Education through Leadership for Learning.

The conference was organised in two zones - the Northern Zone and the Southern Zone. The Northern zone, comprising the Upper East, Upper West, Northern, Brong Ahafo and Ashanti Regions held its conference at Radach Lodge and Conference Centre, Tamale from 16th -18th November, 2011. A total of 75 school leaders participated in the northern conference. This number consisted of 52 headteachers and 23 circuit supervisors.



Sue interacting with some participants

The Southern zone (Eastern, Western, Volta, Greater Accra and Central Regions) held its conference at Windy Lodge, Winneba, from 21st - 23rd November, 2011. The total number of participants at this conference was 79. This number consisted of 55 headteachers and 24 circuit supervisors.

The conferences' main objective was to create an opportunity for the headteachers and circuit supervisors to share their successful practices, challenges and planned coping strategies. The outcome of the conference was to enable IEPA to identify school-level gaps in the application of LfL principles to inform an update of the content of LfL training programmes.

Mr. Saanie, the Tamale Metropolitan Director of Education was at the Northern zone conference to offer support and encouragement to the programme. He was very grateful to the organizers for the conference and entreated participants to participate actively in the programme.



Tamale
Metro Director
Of Education

At the southern zone conference, Dr. George Kankam, Director of the Centre for Educational Policy Studies of the University of Education, Winneba gave the welcome address. Dr. Kankam expressed his delight in being associated with the Leadership for Learning programme and indicated that LfL has led to a paradigm shift in the provision of support and supervision of schools for enhanced learning outcomes. He was critical of political interferences in education and stated that it had the potential of eroding the gains that may be accumulated over time. He therefore urged politicians to allow institutions to exercise their professional mandates. Dr. Kankam also asked for Governments' support for the Leadership for Learning programme.

Dr. George K. T. Oduro, Director of IEPA and LfL Ghana, in opening the conferences, was full of praise for the headteachers and circuit supervisors for their commitment to the programme and for the successes chalked up. He also expressed his gratitude to the Centre for Commonwealth Education, University of Cambridge, especially Professor Emeritus John MacBeath and Dr. Sue Swaffield for their continued support for the programme. Dr. Oduro traced the success of the programme to the Professional Development Leaders (PDLs) and the Coordinator, Dr. Alfred Ampah - Mensah who have been the roots holding firm the ideals of LfL in Ghana. Dr. Oduro bemoaned the abysmal results in the 2010 Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) which had generated public debate with a number of coping strategies suggested. He stressed the need for transforming leadership at the basic school level to ensure that headteachers and circuit supervisors are equipped and supported to provide the leadership required for meeting the quality teaching and learning challenges facing our schools. He emphasized the need for headteachers to place learning at the centre of the administrative, management and leadership roles they perform at the school level.

As usual, Dr. Sue Swaffield of the University of Cambridge was at both venues to support the planning and implementation of the conference. At each venue, Dr. Swaffield reviewed the LfL principles before participants were put into groups to share their experiences and practices. Participants also discussed indicators of success, sustainability, networking and the future. Participants rated the conference very high in terms of its relevance to supporting their work.

Message from Cambridge

It is now three years since, in Singapore, Dr. George K.T. Oduro drew up a manifesto for Leadership for Learning in Ghana but even he could not have foreseen the incredible level of commitment and growth that was to occur over the next few years. His own belief in distributed leadership was to exceed not only his own expectations but those of the Commonwealth Education Trust and those of the Cambridge team. It has been demonstrated year by year, month by month and on a week by week basis by those outstanding people we have come to know (and love) as the PDLs and the STLs.

They have together written the book of transformational change. They exemplify that greatest of leadership paradoxes that we gain power by giving it away. The Commonwealth Education Trust in London is delighted to see their investment being repaid, and for us at the Centre for Commonwealth Education in Cambridge what is happening in Ghana is a continuing source of reward and challenge.

It has been a huge privilege to work with so many inspirational leaders and our thanks are due not only to those 15 PDL pioneers and 120plus leading edge STLs but also to the Circuit Supervisors who have given their support and guidance, the District and Regional Directors who have made it possible, the Ministry and GES who have embraced a powerful and enduring idea. And where would this wonderful movement be without the IEPA team, George, Joe and Alfred who, in 2012, we are confident, will continue to keep the dream alive.

John MacBeath and Sue Swaffield