

Leadership-In-Action Report

Bridging Educational Gaps in Ghana Summer 2026

Lead for Ghana,

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1. SMART Goal Evaluation

My Leadership in Action journey with Lead for Ghana (LFG) began with the broad objective of understanding and contributing to efforts addressing educational inequity in Ghana. LFG works primarily with underserved public schools and communities, using leadership development, teaching, and long-term systems change to improve educational opportunities for marginalized learners. My original plan therefore combined practical engagement with my academic interest in education in Ghana. I entered the placement with three main objectives: to engage alumni fellows and students, to support professional development sessions, lesson observations, and school visits, and to assist with grant research and applications. These objectives were deliberately ambitious for a six-week placement because I wanted to experience different parts of the organization rather than remain within one narrow function.

Goal 1: Engage with alumni fellows and students

The first objective was to engage with at least two alumni fellows or students and use these conversations to better understand the fellowship experience and contribute to a teacher-development manual. I achieved an important part of this objective. During my first week, I met two alumni from LFG's first cohort and heard directly about their experiences in underserved communities and how their fellowship shaped their professional lives afterwards. I also participated in meetings with current associates, where they provided progress updates on their work in their assigned schools and discussed the support they required.

These conversations were valuable because they allowed me to see the fellowship from two points in time. Firstly, the experience of associates currently working in schools and the longer-term trajectories of alumni. The sustainability of the model depends on what knowledge, relationships, and leadership practices remain after the formal fellowship period.

My work later expanded into alumni engagement through The Leadership Network. I worked with Lolo and other colleagues to develop a clearer strategy for alumni response systems, researched employment and partnership opportunities, and contributed to alumni engagement activities and communications. In Week 5, we launched *Catalyst*, an alumni newsletter designed to share alumni experiences, opportunities, events, and leadership insights. The original objective therefore at a point changed in scope.

Outcome: Achieved, with a changed scope.

Goal 2: Support professional development, school visits, and observations

This was the objective that most clearly translated my expectations into practice. I originally intended to observe professional development sessions, participate in school visits, and gradually take on a more active role in training and lesson observation.

The most significant experience was my trip from Accra to the Ahafo Region. There, I met members of the LFG team and visited communities where associates had been placed. I also participated in preparations for a two-day conference for headteachers and gender coordinators from partner schools. The conference was one of the most important experiences of my LiA. Our discussions focused on gender equity in schools and the ways in which the economic realities of farming and mining communities affected attendance. I was able to facilitate some of the

icebreaker activities and participate in discussions about challenging gender stereotypes and strengthening school-level action plans.

This experience challenged my understanding of what educational inequality looks like conceptually and what it looks like in a particular community. Before the visit, I tended to think of educational inequality primarily through indicators such as resources, teacher availability, or academic outcomes. In Ahafo, I saw that school participation is also connected to community economies, gender expectations, geography, and the responsibilities placed on children and families.

My final week brought this objective full circle. I led a training session on gender equity with gender coordinators from LFG partner schools, drawing on lessons from the earlier conference. I received feedback on my delivery and areas for improvement while also learning from the gender coordinators themselves.

Outcome: Achieved.

The progression from participant to facilitator was particularly significant.

Goal 3: Assist with grant research and applications

My third objective was to develop a database of approximately fifteen to twenty relevant national and international grants and contribute to application materials. The purpose was to support LFG's resource mobilization efforts and help expand the organization's capacity to reach more learners.

During the placement, my work touched resource mobilization through report writing, partnership development, and organizational research. In Week 3, I worked on reports for two school projects and recognized that effective reporting was itself connected to partnership development and resource mobilization.

However, this objective was not completed exactly as originally envisioned. The six-week experience developed in directions that required my attention elsewhere, particularly alumni engagement, leadership programming, school-based work, and gender-equity training. Rather than presenting this as a completed goal, I consider it **partially achieved**.

Outcome: Partially achieved.

2. Cross-Goal Reflection

Looking across the three objectives, my goals were ambitious for six weeks, but their ambition was also useful. They encouraged me to engage across different departments and understand LFG as an organization rather than only as a program delivering educational interventions.

The most important pattern was that my contribution became increasingly relational. Whether I was speaking with alumni, communicating with headteachers, participating in a conference, working on reports, helping with The Leadership Network, or facilitating a training session, progress depended on relationships and communication. I would approach goal-setting differently in a future complex environment. I would maintain clear intended outcomes while leaving greater space for emerging opportunities.

Character, Leadership & Global Mindset

1. Who Am I Becoming as a Leader?

My understanding of leadership changed considerably during the LiA. I associated leadership partly with responsibility, initiative, and the ability to organize others. At LFG, I began to understand leadership as something more relational and responsive. As well as servant in nature looking at the service associates were giving to the underserved communities

In my trip to Ahafo and my experience in the conference, I entered the conference as someone coming from outside the immediate community and therefore had to be careful about assuming that my understanding of educational problems was sufficient. The conference was a good reminder that people working directly in schools possess knowledge that cannot always be captured in reports or academic literature. The headteachers directly mentioned this as well.

My role in facilitating activities and eventually leading the gender-equity training required confidence, but it also required humility. I had to be willing to receive feedback and recognize that the people I was training could also teach me. The experience also made leadership feel more practical.

2. Character

Humility was particularly important because I was returning to Ghana after spending much of my university life outside the country. My original LiA plan recognized the possibility of socio-cultural gaps and emphasized the importance of listening rather than imposing my own

assumptions. The experience was a confirmation of why this mattered. It positioned Ghana as not a single educational context. The realities of a school in Accra cannot automatically be transferred to a school in Ahafo or Western North. The rural and peri-urban communities served by LFG have their own economic conditions, expectations, and challenges.

Accountability became equally important. Once I was given responsibility for a task, whether a report, communication, activity, or training session, I had to understand that my work affected other people's ability to do theirs. This encouraged me to take feedback seriously and to become more deliberate about the quality of what I produced.

3. Change Maker Values

Curiosity and collaboration : I entered the placement wanting to understand how educational interventions work in practice, and I found myself constantly asking how different parts of LFG's work connected. There were also tensions between ambition and curiosity. I wanted to accomplish the goals I had set before arriving, but the placement required me to slow down and learn from the organization. My most meaningful contributions came from serving directly the organizational and community demands.

4. Capacities

My strongest growth was in collaboration, communication, facilitation, and organizational understanding. I became more comfortable working across teams and interacting with people in different roles. Working with The Leadership Network exposed me to alumni engagement and professional development, while the conference and final training session strengthened my

facilitation skills. My work on reports also improved my understanding of documentation and tracking data feedback and information.

5. Developing a Global Mindset

The LiA deepened my understanding of educational inequality as both a local and global problem. SDG 4 frames quality education as a global commitment to inclusive and equitable education, but my experience was a reminder that global goals are ultimately implemented within specific communities and institutions. From this experience, global citizenship goes beyond understanding international issues to requiring attentiveness to local realities and recognizing that solutions cannot be separated from context.

Due to this, I do not want to approach educational equity as a problem that can be solved through external expertise alone. More specifically, I will be engaging with meaningful change by listening to educators, communities, students, and local organizations and recognizing the knowledge they already possess.

tion requires attention to the structures surrounding schools as well as teaching itself.

Contribution in Context

My contribution was primarily organizational and community-level rather than systemic in the broadest sense. I did not transform Ghana's education system in six weeks, nor was that a realistic expectation.

Instead, I strengthened existing efforts through reporting, alumni engagement, communication, conference participation, and training. I also contributed to maintaining relationships between LFG and educators in partner schools. The most meaningful contribution was perhaps the continuity between the conference and the final training session. I was able to take lessons from an earlier engagement, incorporate them into a later activity.

Continuity & Sustainability

Sustainable educational change requires institutions rather than individual interventions alone. LFG's fellowship model depends on fellows serving for a defined period, making the question of what remains after they leave particularly important. My original project outline identified this as a central concern and proposed a teacher manual as one possible mechanism for transferring knowledge between cohorts. My placement broadened my understanding of sustainability beyond the manual itself. Alumni networks, teacher development, institutional memory, partnerships, funding, and communication systems all contribute to whether an intervention can continue. Future scholars and staff could build on this work by continuing to strengthen these systems and by ensuring that knowledge generated through individual fellowships does not remain with individuals.

My Role Going Forward

The LiA confirmed my interest in educational equity in Ghana, but it also changed how I understand my potential role in that space. I am leaving with greater appreciation for the difference between studying a problem and working within it.

My previous academic research on colonial education in Ghana examined how schools were historically used to shape students and define educational priorities. This LiA allowed me to encounter a very different dimension of education on the contemporary work of educators and organizations attempting to address inequality. The two experiences are connected because both require asking what education is meant to accomplish, who has access to it, and whose knowledge shapes educational practice. I do not leave Lead for Ghana believing that six weeks is enough to solve educational inequity. Instead, I leave understanding that long-term change is built through sustained relationships, institutional capacity, resources, leadership, and community knowledge. My role going forward is therefore to continue developing the skills required to contribute meaningfully to this work through research, writing, facilitation, partnership development, resource mobilization, and most importantly, the ability to listen before acting.