



"CIRCUIT SUPERVISORS NOW CLEARLY UNDERSTAND THEIR ROLES IN THE DELIVERY OF TEACHING PRACTICE"

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Impact of Mentor Training on Effective Teaching Practice – Abu Dauda's Story



Figure 1: Mr Abu (standing) in a meeting with work colleagues

To help prepare future teachers for the demands of real-life classrooms, student teachers need improved teaching practice as part of their curriculum of study and training at Ghana's Colleges of Education. Furthermore, student teachers need mentoring and colleges must forge better links with partner schools and supporting districts to help strengthen partnerships between colleges and schools. Transforming Teacher Education and Learning (T-TEL) – a Government of Ghana programme supported by UK aid - is supporting Colleges of Education to design and build strong and sustainable partnerships with their demonstration schools, through building the competence of Lead Mentors and Mentors (school headteachers and teachers). It is also training District Education Officials to guide student teachers through their teaching practice and create an enabling environment for improving the provision of teaching practice in colleges and the teacher education or Department of Basic Education (DBE) curriculum. .

Mr. Abu Dauda Dasmani is a **Circuit Supervisor** in the **Garu/Tempane District Education Office** in the Upper East Region of Ghana. He has served in this post **for two years**, and is also the **District Sports Organizer for the Education Office**. He is always eager to explore new ways of adding to his knowledge and skills.

Mr. Abu is an excellent trainer and has always helped run workshops for teachers in the district. He is happy that Circuit Supervisors have been trained and empowered to play key roles in delivering teaching practice for student teachers. In addition to this, he has had a thorough read through of T-TEL's Teaching Practice Handbooks and found them to be very useful.

He describes in detail the challenges they faced before and how it affected them in their work:

The traditional format for orientation of Lead Mentors and Mentors was for colleges of education to invite Lead Mentors to travel a long way, for only a half-day session. Mentors never had the opportunity to take part. The Lead Mentors then had to return and brief the Mentors, which compromised quality. Circuit supervisors were also not invited. We therefore knew very little about our technical role in delivering teaching practice. Mentees (student teachers) didn't respect us because they felt Circuit Supervisors had no role in their training or assessment, making it difficult for us to support them to do their jobs to the highest levels.

He is now enthused that through T-TEL's cluster model of training, Gbewaa College of Education now partners with the District by organizing and running workshops with District Education Officials for Lead Mentors and Mentors. To prepare him for this partnership, Mr. Abu had the opportunity to attend two workshops organized by T-TEL's School Partnerships team in May and June, 2016 and Cluster Mentor Training for Garu 'A' in December, 2016 by Gbewaa COE.



Figure 2: Mr Abu at work in his office

He describes the improvements he sees as a result of the collaboration between the Gbawaa College of Education and the District Education office:

Circuit supervisors now clearly understand their roles in the delivery of teaching practice, and are better at supporting the Mentees during their supervisory visits. Secondly, Lead Mentors, Mentors and Mentees now understand their various roles and are planning, delivering lessons and reflecting together, resulting in a strong mentoring relationship.

He also said that colleges have now shifted from insisting partners come to the college for training and have started to run workshops at the circuit level, which has strengthened their partnerships with District Education Offices.

Key to this is T-TEL's School Partnerships team, which focuses on the improvement of teaching practice delivery. Its primary beneficiaries are the student teachers who undertake teaching practice during their final year of studying to become fully qualified teachers. The partnership between Colleges and District Education Offices (DEOs) helps support improved teaching practice and will ultimately result in better teaching and learning in public schools.

According to Mr. Abu, the orientation for Circuit Supervisors and District Girls Education Officers and the Mentor Training given by T-TEL are central to this success. While acknowledging T-TEL's role in driving this, he stresses that it is a group effort and success should be celebrated by all involved; College Leaders, Tutors, Mentees, District Education Office Staff, Circuit Supervisors, Lead Mentors and Mentors.



Figure 3: Mr. Abu (seated) with colleagues at the Garu District Education Office



Figure 4: Garu District Education Officers in a staff meeting



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