



## CLAUDIA VYVYAN - PROJECT REPORT

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

Name	Claudia Vyvyan		
Place/s Visited	Ghana		
Start Date	29/07/19	Finish Date	11/08/19
Climate	Rainy season	Communications	See links below

### PROJECT DETAILS

As an official youth representative for EduSpots, I introduced the charity to my school last year holding two annual book drives and multiple fundraising events. I am incredibly focussed on the sustainability of the project at my school having set up an official volunteer team before I left in order that I may mentor the new leader.

My plan to raise awareness of ideas in development in the hope of encouraging a fresh critical analysis of education was extremely motivating for my own action. In August 2019 I spent two weeks visiting a number of the 36 self-sustaining, community-led libraries known as our 'Spots' in Ghana observing and learning an enormous amount before I held my own workshops at the larger libraries and schools. I ended my trip with the organisation and presentation of two conferences in Techiman.

I learnt an immense amount about culture, myself, education and campaign management while also having the opportunity to talk to an inspiring group of Ghanaian volunteers about youth leadership and EduSpots from a UK perspective. I specifically discussed the importance of critical self-awareness of our own perspective and how it shapes our framing of reality.

I flew into Accra and stayed one night before travelling to Elmina through Cape Coast, onto Tawka with Team Solar the next day onto Takoradi, through Kumasi to Abofour, Akumadan and Techiman. I thought the best way to give an overview of my visit and all the inspiring activities I did and things I saw was to provide one diary entry from each place that I went to:

#### July 30<sup>th</sup>

I'm currently on a TroTro from Accra to Elmina. A TroTro is a form of public transport that is basically a packed minibus with more people in than seats! This one is particularly packed, and the back doors are completely open! It is really cool to see Accra driving through it – people selling things to cars passing by from their heads all across the roads. Despite not being able to feel my feet or bum.... I'm really enjoying taking in the scenes and listening to Ghanaian music with Cat!

When we got to Elmina we went to see the slave castle originally owned by the Portuguese, then the Americans, then the UK. It was really striking walking into the tiny damp rooms where hundreds of people would have been piled on top of each other and expected to live. It was really shocking to see and gave me a lot to think about!

When we reached Stumble Inn where the Solar Team all work we had a lovely dinner by the beach with a Teach for Ghana fellow called Benjamin. We had really interesting conversations about contentious issues across cultures – my learning had started!

#### August 1<sup>st</sup>

Bash, Emmanuel, Kofi, and Power (our Solar Team!) and Cat and I got to Takwa last night. We arrived this morning at Cedella's new spot. Cedella is one of the winners from African Science Academy of the EduSpots youth changemaker grants. I took Cat's online global citizenship course with her last year and raised the equivalent of her grant in the UK. Alongside local carpenters, painters, community members and children we all painted the outside of the building bright



# Kempson Rosedale

## Enterprise Trust

green and the inside blue! We painted on an EduSpots logo on the front. It looks super cool! Apparently Cedella has put the furniture in now and is a success!

We have taken a tro tro back to Takoradi and found a place to stay – no running water but I'm getting used to bucket showers!

### August 2<sup>nd</sup>

Woke up at 4.45am to catch a big bus to Kumasi. Took 6 hours and then transferred to a tro tro to get to Abofour. Arrive to Abofour to Messiah International School and was smarmed by children saying hello and shouting Cat's name!

The whole school is amazing! Afterwards we were greeted by the teachers. It is a tradition in Ghana to state your mission of why you are here and to explain how it is you came. So, I told them of introducing EduSpots to Marlborough, book drives and fundraising events. After looking around the community we got to Joseph's house where I was staying. Joseph has four children: Gloria, Janet, Alex and Prof. Prince is his nephew. Joseph told us that his brother had recently died in Accra so his brother's children Tio, Solomon and Naomi have come to live with him. The way he said it so casually with sadness went to show the importance of family in Ghana as well as the common illness and death. He immediately adopted his nieces and nephews without thinking about it. Now there are more than 10 people living in their two rooms including me!

Tonight, I learned to dance and played some football and ate copious amounts of food! I chatted to Janet and I taught her some Russian and Spanish and she taught me some Twi (the local dialect). There are so many children all around the room – it is so wholesome.

Janet showed me some of her favourite quotes and her creative writing. I wrote down my favourite quote:

"You cannot teach what you have not been taught"

### August 3<sup>rd</sup>

Today I woke up and read my book before breakfast. We went to the library all day and I was surprised but happy to see so many kids there on a Saturday all reading and playing games! I scoured the shelves of the African fiction section for a while before finding Adichie's Half of a Yellow Sun which I borrowed from the library.

When we went back to the house I called my mum and dad and Joseph and Vida (the mother and father) met on facetime! It was so surreal and made me think how already comfortable and welcome I feel here! I played football all day with the boys before we all had a huge dinner of fish stew and veg – I couldn't finish all of it and felt so bad!!

We all danced on the porch in the evening and showed me their music. Everyone has so much energy it's wonderful! The family life here is so beautiful and positive!

Before dinner the library prefects came to visit – Ulande was 14 but her English was impeccable! She was tiny and looked much younger. She told me she wanted to become a lawyer and study overseas. She said that in Ghana the barristers defend the rich and discard the poor, so she wanted to become a lawyer to support the poor of Ghana. She was truly inspiring!

### August 6<sup>th</sup>

I'm in Techiman in the hotel we are holding the conference at. We had meetings all morning with the manager about logistics before I set off to Akumadan library to meet the drama group! We went to the tailors on our way to get some clothes made for the dinners after the conferences.

I got to the library which was the biggest one we have – 2 storeys. I met Adu who runs the library. When the drama group arrived, we sat down to start chatting about what sort of play we could devise. This proved quite challenging... We spoke about leadership and what it means to be a leader. We managed to create something by the end of the day that they could



practice before tomorrow! The language barrier is difficult because I'm never sure whether they don't understand me or are just shy.

I did some reading with some kids and they taught me some maths as well which was really fun.

Today was super challenging and hard work but we got there in the end!

I managed to write half of my presentation for the conference before the wifi box ran out this evening which is a success!

## **August 8<sup>th</sup>**

Woke up and got the tro tro with Cat and Stephen to Akumadan.

Arrived and spoke to James the librarian who is really cool! Then we went upstairs to look at the African fiction section and spoke to Mr Po, a Nigerian man who comes to the library every day. We spoke about conflicts between Nigeria and Ghana and also the Igbo and Hausa conflict in Nigeria. We spoke about how it's hard to converse with people you feel are dangerous and violent. Peaceful conversation isn't always helpful if they are trying to kill you.

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Tonight, I'm feeling a bit nervous and feel slightly underprepared but really not in the mood to do anything as I'm feeling nauseous and dizzy. Hopefully I will find some time tomorrow and feel up to it!

The conferences were both extremely successful and eye opening! I had great reception for my presentations and also learnt a lot from everyone there. All information about the conferences was broadcast online on our social media platforms

@Eduspots  
@claudia\_vyvyan

<https://eduspots.org/>

While in Ghana I co-wrote articles including our team's ideas and methods for rebalancing educational partnerships within a postcolonial context through international development. Writing alongside the EduSpots senior management team I learnt how often clashing cultural ideas provide a rich and nourishing environment for innovative ideas.

<https://eduspots.org/ideas-for-rebalancing-educational-partnerships-within-a-postcolonial-context/>



## conference photos



## AKUMADAN





## ABOFOUR



JANET, VIDA, JOSPEH  
AND PROF.



THE BUILDING WORKS  
ON THE ABOFOUR  
COMMUNITY LIBRARY  
IN PROCESS!

## CEDELLA'S SPOT NEAR TAKWA

