



**ASIA LEADERSHIP
ROUNDTABLE**

HO CHI MINH CITY
2012

Leadership and Learning in Asia Pacific: Challenges for Research and Practice

Support to Educational Management Development in Sub-Saharan Africa

Jan Arend BRANDS

The paper reflects on support to the LEAD-link network. LEAD-link (Leadership in Education for African Development) includes 12 organisations from 8 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and the support project lasted from 2005 – 2009. Almost all organisations still play a major role in training of head teachers, principals and other educational managers in their respective countries.

The project built on the experiences with the EMLink project in Tanzania to strengthen ADEM (Agency for the Development of Educational Management) in Bagamoyo. That project lasted from 2000 – 2005. ADEM was the only organisation in Tanzania that had a formal task in the training of school leaders.

The Dutch Government generously granted both projects.

The author of the paper was project manager for the EMLink project on behalf of three institutions of higher education (HEIs) in the Netherlands and he had a range of advisory, support and research roles in the LEAD-link project on behalf of the Sub-Saharan African organisations.

The paper starts with a short history of the creation of LEAD-link and describes the four (plus) years of existence of LEAD-link during the project

LEAD-link was conceived in 2003 as a network for knowledge sharing between Educational Leadership and Management Training, Research and Consultancy institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa. Dutch funding for LEAD-link started in 2005.

The network was created to work on a range of objectives amongst which:

- Use of ICT for sharing experiences and lessons learnt
- Co-production of training and learning materials
- Development of research and consultancy
- Exchange of staff and principals

The network was anchored in a virtual hub, the LEAD-link website at first as www.emeoffice.com and later registered under the name www.leadlinknetwork.org . The hub acted also as a communication platform between the partners.

A Network Person did oversee the communication in the network and organized most of the activities of the network.

In each Network-organization a Local Network Coordinator was responsible to make sure that information from a particular organisation became available to all Network-partners through electronic communication.

In the years 2005 – 2009 six projects were implemented. The projects were:

1. Publication on Leadership Role Models in Africa (capturing key lessons from African leaders that could be used as a resource in the training processes of school leaders)
2. Publication around Instructional Leadership in African Schools
3. The influence of school leadership on teachers' work attitudes, behaviour and motivation (Major research program in Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda).
4. Issues surrounding women leadership in education in Malawi, Zambia and South Africa
5. Training of Leadership Trainers (Development of a training manual)
6. Exchange, research and learning programme for principals on the H-Project in South Africa, with school leaders in Sub-Saharan Africa.

While working on the projects several activities were organized to learn as a network about characteristics of current portfolios, differences in the stage of development of the organisations and also about global developments in the field of educational management.

The paper describes eight activities and details two of those activities;

1. Analysis of the stage of development of each of the members of LEAD-link given what was known about the development of similar organisations in other countries.
2. Analysis of priorities on Educational Management Development in national education sector plans of Ministries of Education in the countries involved and in planning of major donors and relevant international organisations.

The paper concludes with a short overview of the results of the strategic process in the wordings of the Network Person (chairperson) of LEAD-link: "Rebranding of LEAD-link, strategic orientation, overarching themes and future projects as chosen by LEAD-link"

In the last paragraph the author reflects on 4 years strategic support to LEAD-link and identifies issues that might be relevant for future similar projects.