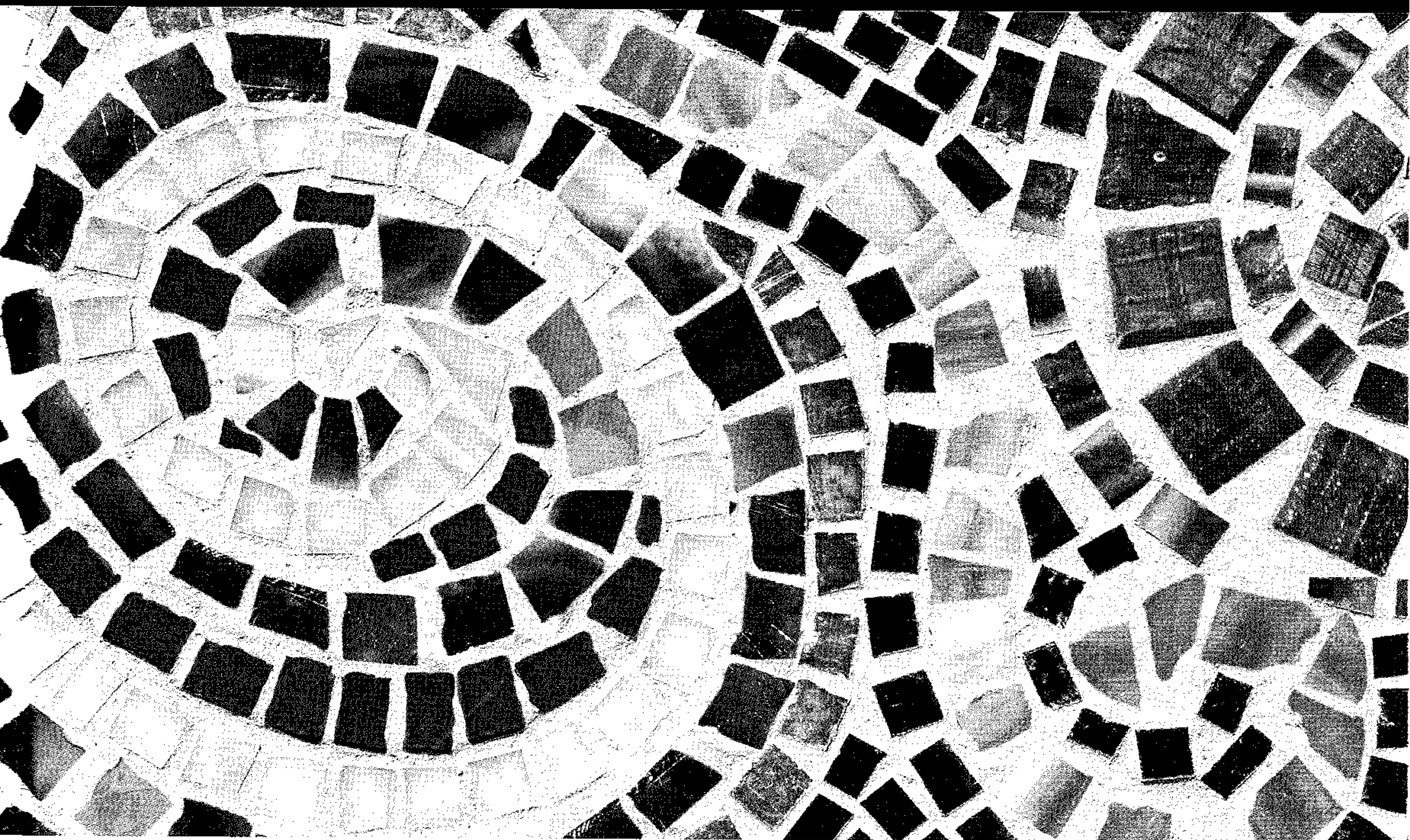




Capacity Development IN PRACTICE



**Edited by Jan Ubels,
Naa-Aku Acquaye-Baddoo
and Alan Fowler**

'To improve results, business would often take an "organizational development" perspective. But this approach is less well established for development challenges usually involving multiple actors. This volume will go a long way to closing this gap by helping development professionals craft practical strategies for long-term improvement.'

Peter Senge, Director of the Center for Organizational Learning at the MIT Sloan School of Management, author of *The Fifth Discipline*

'Here is a wealth of practical experience, amplified by a style and format that makes everything clear and accessible. It is a carefully crafted piece of work that will be recognized as a benchmark resource for this critical area of development challenges.'

Kumi Naidoo, Executive Director of Greenpeace International, former CEO of Civicus

'Through reflection on individual stories this book illustrates what works, why and how. It is a source of inspiration for those who want to increase the return on the billions invested yearly in this area.'

Koos Richelle, Director General EuropeAid Cooperation Office, European Commission

'In linking the local and international, this book is an essential resource for every capacity development practitioner.'

Chiku Malunga, Malawian capacity development practitioner, author on African organizational development

'Provides essential approaches for empowering local actors to create their own solutions, while dealing with their wider relationships. A vital contribution to achieving effectiveness and scale in a time when the paradigm of top-down policy solutions has simply not delivered.'

Herman Wijffels, co-chair of World Connectors, former Netherlands representative at the World Bank

The international development community invests billions of dollars to improve organizational capacity. But real-life practice is poorly understood and undervalued as a distinct professional domain. Written by practitioners, this innovative publication is designed to make capacity development more professional and increasingly effective in achieving development goals.

Practical illustrations draw on experiences from the civic, government and private sectors. A central theme is to understand capacity as more than something internal to organizations. This book shows how capacity also stems from connections between different types of actor and the levels in society at which they operate.

The content is crafted for a broad audience of practitioners in capacity development: leaders, managers, programme staff, front-line workers, advisers, consultants, trainers, facilitators, activists and funding agencies.

Jan Ubels and **Naa-Aku Acquaye-Baddoo** are Senior Strategy Advisers with SNV Netherlands Development Organization. Jan is also chair of the editorial committee of Capacity.org. **Alan Fowler** is an independent development adviser and author of numerous publications on development issues.

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Leadership Development

Leadership is an important factor in fostering connections and guiding change. In development processes it can play a key role in governance, accountability and effectiveness of specific programmes. Given its pivotal role, practitioners need to pay attention to leadership as a critical aspect in capacity-development strategies and work.

In this chapter, Dia and Eggink use a West African case to illustrate how individual and collective leadership development complements and provides leverage for capacity-development efforts. Of particular interest is the combination of individual and collective approaches. The authors also show how engaging in leadership development processes can enhance the capabilities of practitioners themselves.

Leadership, the Hidden Factor in Capacity Development: A West African Experience

*Brigitte Dia and Jan Willem Eggink
with contributions from Lucia Nass*

Introduction

From the moment he took office, following Niger's first-ever local elections in 2003, the young and dynamic mayor of one of the districts of the capital Niamey, struggled to manage and influence a district council of 23 members. Almost all were older and more experienced than him and had very different political ambitions!

Like the mayor, Niger's national government and the community of development partners were keen to make a success of the new decentralized government, which comprised two levels, regional and municipal. They initiated a wide array of technical and organizational capacity-development interventions to support the newly-elected local councils. However, while these were appreciated, none of them

addressed the organizational and personal leadership issues faced by key players like this young mayor. With limited financial, as well as human resources, municipalities were confronted with an enormous challenge to organize and deliver all the services that they were now directly responsible for. The mayor wondered if he had the ability to drive and bring about change in the face of deeply entrenched traditions, power dynamics and ingrained ways of doing things.

How could this mismatch between a clear need for leadership support on the ground and policy momentum for ‘doing things differently’ be bridged?

This chapter makes a case for leadership development as an integral part of capacity-development processes by describing a successful leadership development initiative in the West African region, facilitated by the SNV Netherlands Development Organisation. The programme targeted leaders of local government, civil society and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that were already involved in SNV-supported capacity-development programmes, and provided them with additional leadership support in order to increase the potential for results and strengthen the foundation for sustainability and local ownership. We do this in four parts: first we look at leadership as an important link in the capacity-development ‘puzzle’. We then provide a brief background to the SNV initiative and the target group for the programme. In the third part we take a closer look at the design of the programme, starting with the programme ambitions and constraints followed by an overview of various leadership theories or assumptions that informed our approach. A description of the resulting design is provided, tailored as close to the specific country as possible. Finally we describe the key factors that contributed to the success of the programme and show how the different elements were combined in practice. We also provide some perspectives on the potential for making leadership development a more integral part of capacity development.

Leadership – an important piece of the capacity-development puzzle

Leadership is important in almost all human endeavours that involve two or more people, whether they are civil, public or private actors. The recognition that leadership is critical to development success is not new. Two recent, large studies by the Global Leadership Initiative (2007) and the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM, 2008) underscore the importance and relevance of leadership development in capacity-development processes. Similarly, a review of successful rural development programmes in the 1990s by Uphoff, Esman and Anirudh (1996; 1998) highlighted the crucial role of key individuals in initiating change and guiding innovation.

There is no shortage of leadership support programmes today. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has supported more than 700 initiatives, providing access to leadership programmes in more than 30 countries (2005). The World Bank Institute’s leadership development programme (2008) offers customized support to high- and mid-level decision-makers and emerging leaders at national and sub-national levels in developing countries. In addition,

many development organizations have promoted and financed some form of support to the leaders of organizations that they work with or support. This is a positive trend and there are many more that are not mentioned here. In this sense, the West African initiative described here is not unique. What makes it interesting is the fact that the programme was embedded in local capacity-development processes in a specific country and sought to develop both individual and collective leadership abilities. It combined introduction to concepts and skill-building with peer feedback, experimentation in real-time, real-life leadership situations, and coaching over a significant period of time to building in action-reflection cycles. The programme was also actively supported by capacity-development practitioners (SNV advisers) who took on the role of coaches and were themselves mentored by skilled programme facilitators to deepen their abilities to work effectively with leaders as part of their practice.

It must be mentioned that apart from West Africa, SNV initiated leadership development in Asia (Laos) and the Balkans (Albania) as well. The experiences across the three regions were regularly shared and discussed across the organization. SNV advisers involved in the leadership development initiatives also interacted with, and learned from, other organizations, such as the World Bank, UNDP and IBIS Education for Development (a Danish development organization). With time, it was possible to distil the following tentative conclusions or insights about what constitutes effective leadership in a development context. Such leaders:

- work in complex settings, where collective leadership is needed;
- achieve results in the face of uncertainty and ambiguity; they show the flexibility and fortitude needed to achieve tangible results along the way to broader social change;
- keep learning and guide others in ongoing learning – change is constant;
- manage people through an understanding of their motives and behaviours, that is, they have a good understanding of the reasons behind their actions and behaviour in the context of the wider culture and cross-cultural relationships in which they operate;
- provide vision and meaning and direction, and inspire, motivate and mobilize others, drawing inspiration from global development and change movements (such as gender equality, rights of minorities, or more inclusive approaches to business);
- take initiative to (co-)create the future, instead of defining oneself as a victim of circumstances;
- demonstrate personal values that are congruent to the values espoused in their leadership;
- serve the benefit of the whole, of others, the team, the organization, society – going beyond one's mere self-interest;
- demonstrate credibility and the courage to address value conflicts and exclusion even when these are embedded in deeply traditional attitudes and practices.

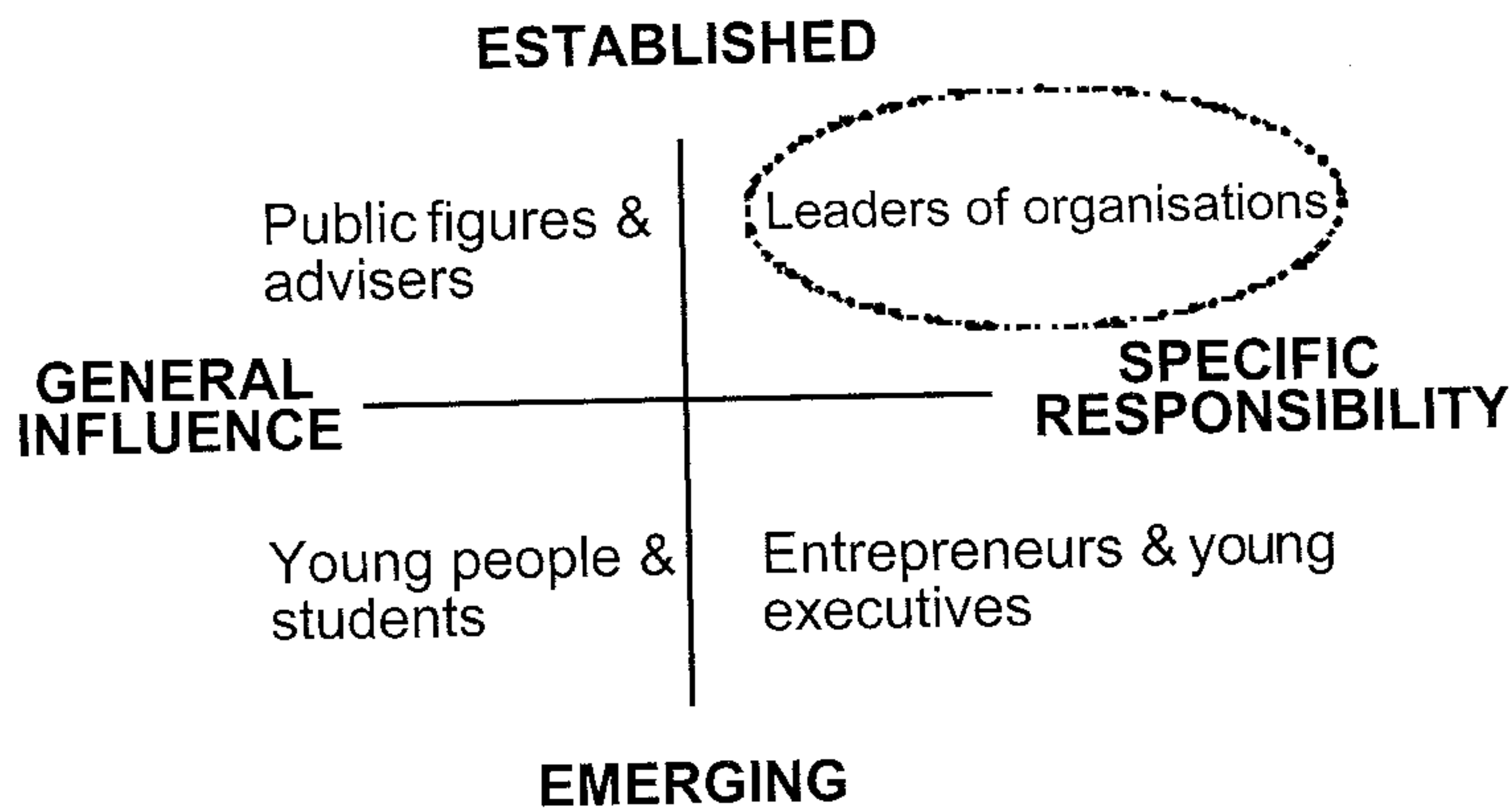
Background to the Leadership for Change Programme (PLC)

Before 2005, there was no systematic training and coaching of leaders of the local organizations and networks that SNV was supporting in its capacity-development work, although SNV advisers did provide support to individual leaders and were aware that, while often informal, such support was both effective and highly appreciated. It also became increasingly clear that such mentoring relationships did play a critical role in the effectiveness of capacity-development support to the wider team, organization or network that SNV was supporting.

As mentioned earlier, from 2005 onwards, three separate initiatives took root in different SNV regions: West Africa, Albania in the Balkan region and Laos in South-East Asia. In each of these locations, SNV advisers with the support of senior managers experimented with different programmes to incorporate leadership development into their capacity-development approach in an effort to respond to recurrent issues around leadership that kept coming up in different processes, especially at the sub-national level.

In West Africa, a small task force was set up to look at practical ways of supporting the leaders of local organizations that were existing SNV clients. This effectively became the design team for the new Leadership for Change Programme (PLC) programme. The programme started in Niger and over a period of four years it had spread to include seven countries in the region (Niger, Mali, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Guinea Bissau and Ghana).

One of the first questions that PLC addressed was which type of leader to target in order to provide a focus for the programme. The leaders that SNV advisers encountered in their practice fell into different categories. Figure 16.1 illustrates



Source: Eggink, J.W., 2005

Figure 16.1 Typology of leaders

the typology that gradually emerged from numerous discussions on this question. The typology helped to clarify that the programme would be for more or less established leaders with specific responsibilities in the organizations that SNV served. These included heads of municipalities or districts within the Niger local government structure, heads of departments responsible for delivery of basic services such as health, education, water and sanitation, and leaders of local civil society organizations (CSOs) and networks who were key players in the sectors that SNV focused on.

Responsive design

As a team, we were not interested in simply developing a standard, albeit good quality leadership programme. We wanted a design that would help participants to begin to confront and address the leadership issues they currently faced in their roles. We wanted a design that would develop leadership capabilities but also act as a resource; tackling real-time issues by drawing on the collective knowledge and experience of participants, facilitators and coaches alike. The PLC design had to bring ‘the world of participants into the room’. Instead of starting with what the programme could contain, we began by posing two sets of issues the design would have to respond to: the programme ambitions: what we wanted the programme to contribute to the nature and quality of local leadership, and the anticipated constraints: aspects of the context and culture that we knew could be problematic if not redressed or accounted for in the final design.

Programme goals and target group

We wanted to help individual leaders to increase their self awareness, develop their flexibility in using particular leadership styles, and be more open to feedback (both direct and indirect) about the quality and impact of their leadership style. The leaders we worked with were certainly aware of the power that came with their positions, especially in a culture where hierarchy was important. They were, however, less aware of themselves as individuals and the impact or effect they had on others and the organizations they led. They did not show awareness of the potential for using their power as a force for change and often did not realize that they had different options when faced with difficult situations. Would they be prepared for example to drop the common ‘leader decides it all’ approach and give more space to others to contribute and collaborate?

One of the persistent issues that come up in practice is the loss of momentum when leaders and their immediate teams have to follow through on some of the more challenging change processes needed to achieve effective coordination and delivery of services. A fundamental goal of the programme was thus to provide a space where leaders could be challenged by their peers to take some risks and show results, boosting their confidence to keep going at the end of the programme. In addition, the programme also aimed to help leaders demonstrate some early results as this would enhance their credibility within their organizations and wider communities and further improve their potential to influence others.

Although SNV worked with some of the organizations individually and with others as part of multi-stakeholder networks, the development issues in a particular area were so interconnected that within this group, it made sense to stimulate a sense of joint responsibility among participants. We felt that collectively, the leaders involved in the programme had the potential to influence and drive significant shifts in performance and culture at the sub-national level. We also understood leadership in capacity-development processes to be broader than training and coaching of leaders to improve their individual leadership skills. It also touches on the spaces where rules and norms about governance and mechanisms of accountability are created, negotiated and practised.

In summary, we wanted the design of the PLC to combine a focus on helping individuals to play an influential and helpful role in the performance and sustainability of their different organizations, on the one hand, and helping the collective to drive development processes that required complex collaboration beyond single organizational borders on the other. We asked ourselves such questions as: How will the design support the emergence of a community of leaders that share a vision for change and can call on each other for support and feedback? How can the programme sustain their motivation and focus on deeper change possibilities while they are constantly called upon to address daily worries of their constituents and employees?

Constraints

Right from the outset, we also anticipated a number of constraints that needed to be mitigated in the resulting design and approach of the programme. Addressing the behaviour of a group of high profile leaders in a setting where ‘face saving’ was an important motivation, especially for public leaders, would not be an easy task. Would they be interested in organized self-reflection? How would we handle direct feedback in a cultural context where the opposite was the norm in social relationships? Did we, as facilitators, have the right competencies to guide them and provide them with enough valuable insights?

We also had concerns about how the design could be implemented in such a way that it would also build the capacity of SNV advisers who would act as coaches to improve their ability to work with leaders in a more systematic way.

Resulting design and programme structure

The design that emerged from this soul-searching combined different elements to create a truly responsive programme. PLC was an innovative and intensive training and coaching programme that took place over a period of ten months, combined residential group workshops with practical projects on-the-job and follow-up and coaching that ensured the principles learned at the workshops were internalized and applied to real-life situations. Although the programme introduced new concepts and skills relevant to leadership in the residential workshops, it drew heavily on participants’ experiences of being leaders and the dilemmas they needed to resolve. This made it highly relevant to them at a practical level.

Table 16.1 *Main blocks of the PLC curriculum*

<i>Module 1 – Leading yourself</i>	<i>Module 2 – Leading your organization and context</i>	<i>Module 3 – Leading people and teams</i>
Main aim was to increase self awareness in context of leadership styles and quality. Topics included concepts of leadership / personality types / leadership in Africa / time management	Aim was to improve strategic leadership within and across organizations. Topics included visioning / values and paradigms / strategizing / leadership and the Millennium Development Goals / external communication / public relations	Aim was to develop understanding of groups and dynamics from individual level to teams. Topics included situational leadership / conflict management / change and resistance / leading teams and meetings.
<i>Cross-cutting elements and recurrent themes in each module</i>		
Preparatory readings to provide framework and language		
Introduction of some theoretical concepts and application to context		
Exercises to ground theory and build underpinning skills that relate to leadership practice		
Real-life cases brought in by the participants for peer reflection		
Individual reflection (diary) and action planning.		

The main elements of the programme itself were not new or unique – they are well known and widely used. What was distinctive was the way they were combined over the duration of the programme and consistently used to address questions and needs of participants as they arose. Participants did not experience a break in the programme so motivation and momentum was sustained throughout, although the intensity of interaction obviously varied.

Figure 16.2 captures the main features of the programme in chronological order. The preparation phase involved personal intake interviews with each participant and a ‘360-degree’ feedback exercise to create a baseline for assessing results and impact of the programme and to guide aspects that individuals might want to focus on.

Each of the three PLC four-day workshops provided an intensive interaction space for experiential-based introduction of new concepts, skill building, peer coaching and reflection. In between the workshops participants benefited from one-to-one coaching from senior SNV advisers as they formulated and implemented action plans for change in their respective organizations, based on the personal leadership and organizational goals they had set themselves. By keeping the workshops three months apart, we allowed enough time for participants to take meaningful actions in their organization and observe some short term results. They also kept in touch informally with each other. The relationships formed in the residential workshops made it easier for participants to call on each other for

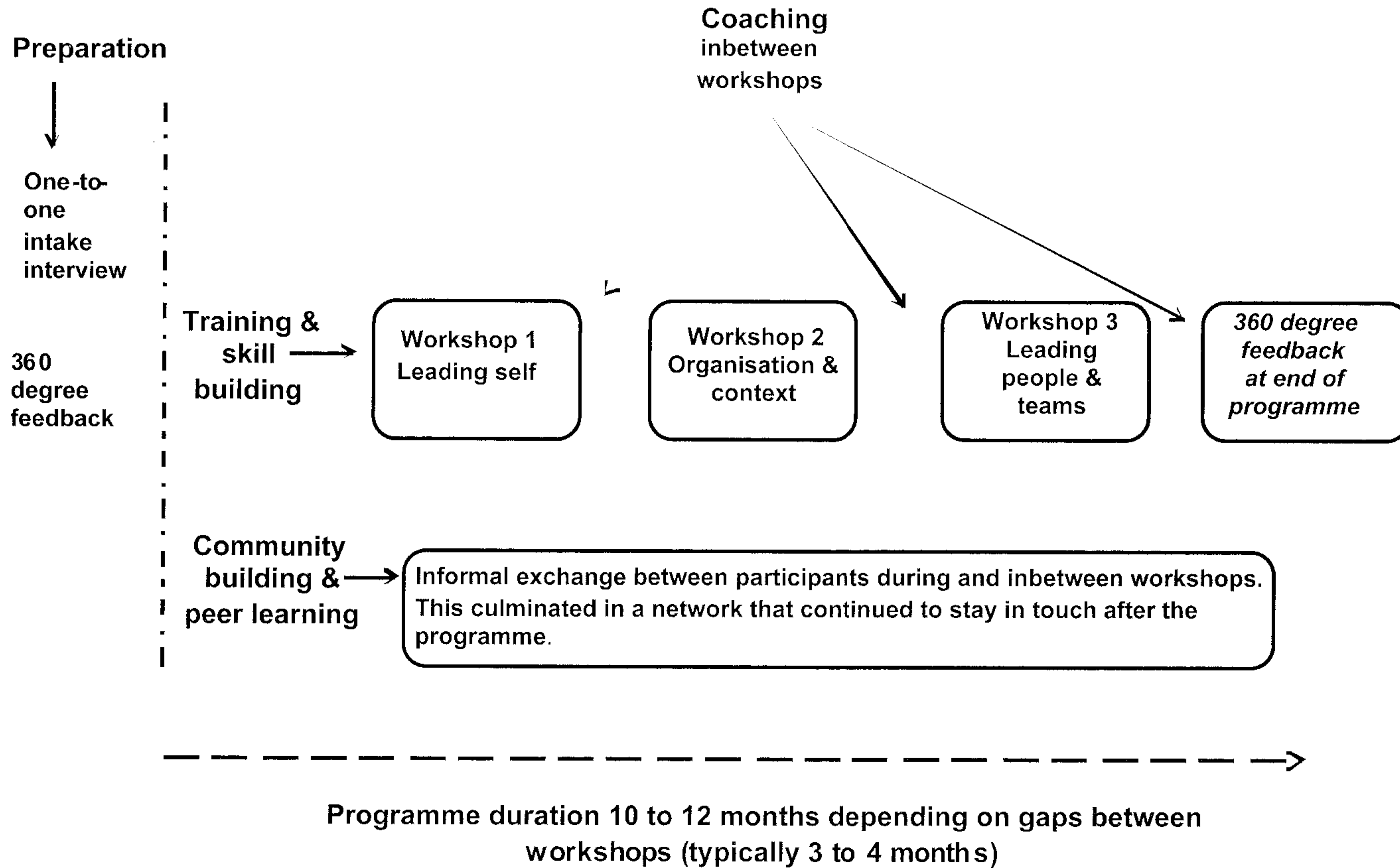


Figure 16.2 Structure of the Leadership for Change Programme (PLC)

help and also to start collaborating where they would previously not have done so. Coaching continued for a while after the programme, and participants repeated the 360-degree feedback exercise three months after the closure to assess the progress made.

Notions of leadership in the programme

Leadership theories and conceptual frameworks are plentiful and have evolved over many years. We did not define leadership in abstract terms or propose one theory that explains leadership in a coherent manner. Just as there are many definitions of leadership, there are many different approaches to the development of leadership. Each of them is informed by particular assumptions or theories of what leadership is and how it comes about. The simple classification provided in Table 16.1 (page 216) gives some idea of this evolution. The theories listed are a product of their time. They all serve to explain some aspects of leadership and ignore or downplay others. While we did not propose one ‘grand’ theory that explains leadership in a coherent manner, we made a conscious choice to work with leadership development interventions that reflected behavioural, situational and participatory views of leadership. We felt that these would help participants to develop the capabilities and attitudes demanded by the complexity of issues they had to deal with in work situations.

Bringing it all together – key success factors

On reflection, it was the combination of a number of major as well as very small design and process choices in direct response to our context that contributed to the PLC’s success. The major design choices showed their value during implementation in a number of ways, which are now described.

Choice of participants

PLC participants were carefully chosen. The first criterion was leadership of an organization or network to which SNV was already providing capacity-development support. The aim of the programme was not only to develop individual leaders but also to contribute to the effectiveness of ongoing capacity-development projects by boosting the quality of leadership. The organizations represented in the PLC were seen as key actors with the potential to bring about significant change in their respective sectors and areas. Participation was restricted to the very senior level of leadership in these organizations. This helped participants to open up and accept others as peers who understood the specific challenges at that level of seniority and from whom they would accept feedback. This criterion also had the added value that participants in the PLC pilot attained a certain status in the community of local leaders. Choosing the name ‘Leadership for Change’ made clear from the start that we were in search for participants ready to look in the mirror, to face what they would encounter and to act upon that and improve their performance.

Table 16.2 *Broad classification of leadership theories and related interventions*

Classification of leadership theories or concepts	Main assumptions upon which interventions are based	Relevance/helpfulness for West Africa leadership development programme
Trait	<p>Leaders are born with certain characteristics and personality traits. These 'traits' are inherent - a person either has them or not.</p> <p>Main aim of interventions would be identify rather than develop these traits.</p>	None
Behavioural	<p>Leadership is a set of behaviours that can be learned.</p> <p>People can be taught these leadership behaviours and apply them to good effect.</p> <p>Interventions are heavily skill based and tend to be in training programmes</p>	High
Situational or contingency	<p>Style of a leader depends on the context, situation, types of relationships, tasks, staff willingness and capability.</p> <p>Interventions aim to help leaders to identify the combination of factors in their particular situation and choose appropriate styles to match. Often hand in hand with training on how to 'use' a particular style.</p>	High
Transformational/charismatic	<p>Relationship or bond between leaders and followers is important. Leaders inspire others to go beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group or organization. Leaders show desire to serve others</p> <p>Interventions promote social awareness and how to understand values and motives of others to be able to influence them</p>	Medium
Dispersed or distributed / collective	<p>Leadership is informal and emergent – there is a leader in all of us. The collective as a whole is leader, starting with shared beliefs, emerging out of a situation and process is in which we all influence each other</p> <p>Interventions tend to be with whole group together</p>	Medium to low
Participative	<p>Leadership relies on input from followers and encourages participation. Emphasizes collaboration and shared power.</p> <p>Interventions stress leaders' understanding of diverse views, and address how to communicate and how to stimulate others to participate</p>	High

The fact that no dependency relations existed within the group also made it easier for the participants to take a vulnerable position during the training.

Clarity of expectations and commitment at intake

Taking time to conduct individual intake interviews before the programme paid off. Participants received dedicated attention and could freely explore the implications and demands of committing to such a programme. The PLC intake team gained significant insight into each participant's professional situation and motivation for participation. It also established early trust between individuals and the facilitation. Selected participants contributed the equivalent of about US\$67 as a way of showing their commitment and were required to confirm their participation at all three workshops before starting the programme. To facilitate communication about the programme within the participating organizations a tri-partite contract had to be signed by SNV, the participant and his/her organization. The '360-degree' feedback exercise (a method of gathering feedback on an individual's behaviour and performance from multiple sources including peers, subordinates or direct reports, and managers) at the start and at the end of the programme was instrumental in determining leadership challenges for the participant as well as setting a baseline for measuring the effect of the programme. Participants gathered feedback about their leadership styles and effectiveness from peers at work: those senior to them and some junior. The feedback questionnaire was based on the leadership skills and abilities that the programme aimed to help participants to develop.

Coaching on the job

The decision to combine a series of workshops with on-the-job coaching proved to be the most important design element in the programme. Coaches helped the participants to reflect upon their experiences while experimenting with new behaviour, perceptions and projects in their daily leadership roles. Assigning a coaching role to senior SNV advisers who were already working with these organizations, sparked off a very interesting mutual learning process. The relationship between SNV-adviser and the leader he or she was coaching became much more personal and behaviour-oriented. SNV advisers working as coaches alongside the senior facilitators of the programme underwent a training-of-trainers programme before the programme started and continued to have access to the senior coach throughout the programme to reflect on their coaching practice and enhance the quality of coaching they provided. As they developed in their coaching skills and demonstrated more maturity, they earned more credibility with the leaders they coached. In all countries where the programme has been adopted, SNV-advisers now routinely receive extra training on coaching skills and leadership development. Furthermore, based on our early experiences, we have learned that it is worthwhile to invest in making the coaches well acquainted with the content of the workshops and in briefing them at the end of each workshop before they meet leaders for coaching.

Another role played by the coach is providing support to the leader in his or her effort to realize the organizational change project (formulated during the second

workshop). Although the quality and intensity of the coaching may differ considerably in the different coach–leader pairs in successive evaluations of the programme, participants invariably name the combination of coaching and training as one of the key factors for success of the PLC.

Programme embeddedness in participants' leadership practice

This was another strong aspect of the PLC programme. Participants' own organizations provided a relatively safe setting in which to start to consciously practise leadership of a change process. Each participant had to identify improvements or changes they wanted to initiate and lead in their organization or department. The length of the programme (one year) allowed for this and enabled participants and their peers to track their own and each other's progress over time. The time allowed the development of meaningful relationships between participants and the level of trust that developed between them, as a result, meant that they could give each other truthful and critical feedback. The relationships built here were sustained beyond the duration of the programme. A year after the completion of the programme, more than half of the participants were still in touch with each other.

Peer learning and reflection

The targeted participants of the programme were men and women with many years of experience. Their situation and practice differed, their individual questions differed and their personal strengths and weaknesses were not the same. So the most practical way to help them become more effective leaders was not to offer a one-size-fits-all explanation of effective leadership behaviour. It made much more sense to help each participant become better aware of their own leadership behaviour; help them reflect about more effective ways to reach their goals; and then monitor them as they put their self-designed new behaviour into practice.

Peer relationships were an invaluable resource in this process. PLC participants brought a wealth of experiences and diverse perspectives but also found strong common threads in their stories and cases. This action-learning approach underscored the whole philosophy of the PLC. Cut off for four days from the daily fuss and the claims of their subordinates, the members of the group started to share their personal worries and pre-occupations among each other, especially during breaks and in the evenings. The programme also induced reflections on personal values, democracy and accountability of the leadership towards its employees or citizens. Ultimately, all participants had end responsibility for an organization or department and felt personal pressure to deliver: leadership development had immediate, not future relevance

Creating a network of leaders for change

The last design principle was the creation of a network of PLC alumni, with the goal of maintaining relationships and providing mutual support over a longer

period of time. The alumni network was based on the simple idea of drawing on the common experience and background of the ex-participants to connect leaders with a shared passion for good governance.

In Niger and Cameroon an official association of 'Leaders for Change' has been created.

SNV supports these organizations as they fit in well with emerging insights on the importance of knowledge networks in building capacity. It is hoped that these associations may yield new initiatives for improved accountability of leaders and continue to empower their members in their often lonely fight against prejudice, vested interests and culturally-ingrained leadership constraints.

Participants' perspective on results

The evaluations held at the end of each training cycle have shown an invariably high appreciation among participants with regard to the content and style, as well as the set-up, of the programme. On content, PLC participants have consistently highlighted the focus on individual behaviour and practical management issues. On style, they welcome the personal atmosphere and the opportunity to freely exchange their experiences and concerns with 'colleague-leaders' who are in the same position but often from completely different sectors of society. They also value the interchange of training and coaching in the trajectory, which allows them to gradually grow and learn on the job and which is complementary to other SNV interventions in their organizations, for example conducting an organizational analysis.

What better way to conclude than to give the last word to the newly elected young mayor we encountered at the beginning of this chapter.

The Programme '*Leadership for Change*' (PLC) came for me as a gift from heaven. The modules on psychological types and feedback have opened my eyes on how perception and behaviour, including my own, determine the quality of processes in my organization. Participating in the PLC has given a boost to my self-confidence. It helped me defeat my fear of speaking in public. I have also learned how to handle delicate feedback of my colleagues in a constructive way. The modules on non-defensive communication, situational leadership and management of team-performance have been very helpful to embark upon a process of joint analysing, visioning and strategizing. This has taken away blockages for development. My district is now the most successful in Niamey; we have become a district of reference for all the country.

New developments

After some years of experience with the Leadership for Change Programme, new forms of leadership programmes are emerging based on the classic PLC approach. For example, in Mali, SNV advisers have designed and implemented a leadership programme in a local language, selectively picking from the content and methods of the PLC those aspects which seem relevant for peasant-leaders, like personal style of communicating, empowering people and organizing for collaborative action. In Benin a mayor of a commune has approached SNV to facilitate a leadership programme similar to the PLC for the local leaders he depends upon for achieving his local development plan. This programme is run with the help of a trainer based in Benin. In Niger SNV is supporting the National College for Administrators (ENA) to implement a leadership programme inspired by the PLC. The UNDP has also shown interest in developing in-company leadership programmes based upon the 'Leadership for Change' concept.

Box 16.1 Some personal reactions and perspectives from PLC alumni

I now dare to speak out and put the fish on the table....I am able to present my view to external parties.

I do not talk all the time during meetings any more, but I listen more and ask people what they think we should do.

I trust others to do their job and now I have more time, my collaborators have more fun and our organization is much more efficient.

We have analysed together what actions to take and tax-incomes have increased 20 per cent in a month!

The course made me aware of my own leadership style, which is rather domineering. As a result, I began to have more confidence in my colleagues and have started delegating jobs to them. The results have been amazing. My colleagues are much more motivated, and I go home at 6 pm with the job done.

Thanks to the support of the group, I persisted in trying to find funding to put my plans into action. I used to lose heart whenever money was short, but this time I succeeded in finding a backer.

Now I can see that once I have delegated a job to someone I have to follow it up, otherwise there may be unwelcome surprises.

Looking ahead – integrating leadership development as part of capacity development

Most leadership programmes in the development sector are one-off events or a series of events within specific agendas of funding organizations. While capacity-development practitioners, their organizations and an increasing number of donor organizations fully recognize the need for, and potential of investment in leadership development, there are simply not enough providers at local or sub-national level. Good quality leadership programmes require specialist trainers and coaches and a level of investment that is often not available below the national level. Initiatives like the West Africa programme and those offered by UNDP and World Bank require substantial investments. Many capacity-development organizations are not able to commit to developing and running such programmes – it not part of their core business and they are often not funded in ways that allow them to invest in this way. There are, however, interesting possibilities for enhancing collaboration among Southern-based institutions to develop leadership programme methodologies that are flexible enough to adapt for particular groups of participants within a capacity development context. It is not enough to provide ‘off the shelf’ leadership programmes, no matter how high the quality. Our experiences in West Africa show how much leverage can be gained by situating the programme firmly in the daily lives of practitioners where their immediate dilemmas are up for discussion and where they can take risks and get immediate feedback. Collaborating with and helping local institutions and consultancies to become established providers of leadership programmes and interventions would strengthen the supply in a particular environment making it more accessible to a wider range of leaders at the sub-national and community levels.

Although this chapter has focused on leadership support through well designed programmes, we realize that it is not always possible or feasible to access the resources required to implement an initiative like the Leadership for Change Programme. Yet the issues of leadership quality and leader development remain. Leaders of local organizations and key players in multi-actor settings can be supported as an integral part of capacity-development intervention. It requires methodical analysis of the types of leadership issues and challenges that occur in different capacity-development settings in order to identify the most appropriate forms of support. There are implications for practitioner understanding of leadership dynamics and the skills to use the different intervention methods available to support and develop leaders and leadership teams. This may be addressed in professional learning programmes for practitioners. Within the sub-practice of leadership development there are smaller scale interventions, for example peer-to-peer learning, that can be effective with small group of leaders and which do not require the in-depth preparation or training of practitioners.

If leadership is such an important link in the capacity-development and sustainability puzzle, its provision has to be scaled up but not in a way that separates leadership support from the substantive capacity-development processes that

targeted leaders are involved in. It also requires more consistent attention to the way practitioners understand leadership and their skills in working with leaders.

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- Uphoff, N., Esman, M.J. and Krishna, A. (eds) (1998) *Reasons for Success: Learning from Instructive Experiences in Rural Development*, Kumarian Press, West Hartford, CT
- World Bank Institute (2008) *Focus on Leadership*, World Bank, Washington DC
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/WBI/Resources/213798-1253552326261/background_leader_web.pdf (accessed on 30 November 2009)

Recommended readings

Chapter 3 of this volume, which describes a practical case demonstrating the need to connect capacities at multiple levels, also touches on the roles of practitioners, including support to key actors and leaders. Readers may also take a look at Chapter 15, which calls for a fresh look at the role of community-based organizations and their leadership, and Chapter 23, where the potential for stimulating local provision of capacity-development services (including leadership development) is explored. Finally, Chapter 20 offers creative ways of using evaluation for personal learning and reflection. For those interested in deepening the topic of leadership, the following are interesting entrances from different angles.

Covey, S. R. (1989) *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. Restoring the Character Ethic*, Simon and Schuster, New York

Covey's bestseller is very good background reading for people interested in self-reflection. His models of time management and the circle of influence were used to great effect in the Leadership for Change Programme.

Hannum, K.M, Martineau, J.W, and Reinelt, C. (2007), *The Handbook of Leadership Development Evaluation* – Center for Creative Leadership, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco

This handbook is a comprehensive resource filled with examples, tools and the most innovative models and approaches for evaluating leadership development in a variety of settings.

Kouzes, J.M. and Posner, B.Z. (2003) *The Leadership Challenge*, third edition, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco

The five leadership practices discussed by Kouzes and Posner provide a solid cross-cultural base for discussions about what leadership is. The 360-degree feedback test we use within the Leadership for Change programme was based upon their theory.

Olivier de Sardan, J.P (2003) *State Bureaucracy and Governance in West Francophone Africa: Empirical Diagnosis and Historical Perspective* (Revised version of a contribution for the colloquium of CODESRIA), Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, Dakar

In this brilliant article, Sardan depicts a vivid picture of the dilemmas of modern African leaders finding themselves between the 'Scylla and Charybdis' of traditional patronage and modern demands of efficiency and transparency.

Senge, P.M. (1990) *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*, Currency/ Random House, London

There is probably no better introduction to systems thinking for managers than this book. This is especially so because the link is made with four other important aspects of effective leadership: personal mastery, mental models, shared vision and team learning.

Zigarmi, D., Blanchard, K., O'Connor, M. and Edeburn, C. (2004) *The Leader Within: Learning Enough about Yourself to Lead Others*, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ

Another book we used a lot on the programme, this includes a concise description of the model of psychological leadership dispositions. It treats the subjects of values and perception and it contains a renewed description of Blanchard's old but still relevant theory of situational leadership.