

Africa Drive Project Case Study Note

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MDG Addressed: (?)
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Author's Notes:

Objectives

The intended target group of this learning case study are middle or senior managers from government organisations, in developing countries, who are assigned to work on cross-sectoral partnership projects or programmes. Researchers on partnerships are another target group.

Sources of Information

The case study is based on both primary and secondary research, including the major project documents of provided by the partners as well as interviews with representatives of the partner organisations and service providers. A total of sixteen interviews were undertaken in the period from 15th to 27th July 2007 (See Appendix 1 for details). The interview questions used were the ones provided by the PwG template. Although the PwG guideline recommends that interviews be conducted only with the main partner organisations, in this case all the identified informants (sixteen in total) were willing to take part in the interview within the allocated timeframe.

Limitations

One limitation of the case study is the fact that the findings of the final external review by the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University were not incorporated. The review was still underway at the time of writing of this report. For this reason it was decided to exclude the section on monitoring and evaluation from the original resource case (see Appendix 2), since it only laid out the accountability system set up within the partnering agreement but did not offer any insights into how this system was actually used by the partners to address partnering or project issues as they arose.

Another (perceived) limitation is the length of the case study - a result of the multiple partners involved and the overwhelming information gleaned from primary and secondary sources.

Editor's Notes

Primary Focus

The case study charts the development of a cross-sector partnership between a multitude of partners representing, government, civil society, the private sector and international agencies. The primary focus of the case study is to highlight the

- challenges involved in building, managing, implementing and sustaining a cross-sector partnership between a multitude of players
- importance of clarifying partner roles and responsibilities,
- need for discriminating between risk-sharing partners and delivery providers
- partnering and project management skills required for such a cross-sector partnership

Possible Uses

The case study can be used in a learning environment to address a number of partnering issues) either individually or in a group setting). For example the readers/participants are asked to read the case study and then presented with the following scenarios:

- The ADP partners have approached your international donor agency to seek funding for the roll-out of the project. As the Programme Officer in-charge of reviewing the request would you recommend supporting the project? If so under what circumstances?
- The ADP partners have decided to roll-out the project across Southern Africa. They have approached you as a cross-sector partnership broker to seek your expert opinion on how – if at all – they should revise their partnering approach.

Africa Drive Project

Author: Girum Bahri

Abstract

This case study profiles a project initiated in South Africa to address educational needs through ICT based learning. Launched as a cross-sector partnership between a multitude of partners representing, the government, private sector, civil society and international organisations, the Africa Drive Project offers interesting insights into a multi-stakeholder partnering.

Based on desk research and 16 interviews with the project partners, this case study seeks to examine the challenges of managing a partnership between many diverse organisations and agencies, highlights the project and partnering skills required and the need for clarity in defining partnering roles and responsibilities.

1. Background to the Partnership

The Africa Drive Project (ADP) was established in 2002 to address the shortage of qualified primary and secondary school science and mathematics teachers in South Africa.

According to a 1997 EduSource report only 50% of the mathematics teachers and 42% of the science teachers in South Africa had specialised learning area subject training.¹ This lack of qualified teachers was affecting the national performance levels among secondary school students of mathematics and science. The Third International Mathematics and Science Study showed that South African Grade 8 learners performed significantly worse than their international counterparts, scoring 35% in Mathematics, compared to the overall 51% in 41 countries, and more recently in 2000, scoring only 28% compared to the 49% overall average – lower than many developing countries, such as Indonesia, Chile and Morocco.²

Given these circumstances, a consortium of local and international organisations came together in response to a call from President Thabo Mbeki to set up the Africa Drive Project in the North-West Province of South Africa.

¹ ADP report.

² *ibid.*

Launched in 2002 as a formal three-year research and development pilot project, the Africa Drive Project was designed to:

- “Develop innovative new learning strategies and programmes to improve the knowledge, skills and competencies of educators in Physical Science, Biology, Mathematics, Technology (ICT), and Business Studies (Entrepreneurship), English Communication Skills and Computer Literacy
- Develop, test, introduce and integrate new learning programmes, technologies and methodologies for the delivery of quality learning to in-service educators
- Address, whilst proffering the formal elements of education and training, the role the educator can play in the community in respect of critical social issues such as the prevention of HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis, and the promotion of conservation of the environment
- Introduce the utilisation and integration of new strategies and technologies for teaching and learning, to both educators and learners at schools, thereby also contributing to bridging the digital divide
- Develop relevant learning, technology and cost models on which the rollout of blended learning in a developing society, could be based, and
- Create new business opportunities within the education and training sectors, such as content development, learning facilitation, technology maintenance and support.”

ADP offered training for educators through six learning centres situated in schools in the North-West Province, as well as through the University’s Main Campus in Mafikeng and its satellite campus at Mankwe. In line with the requirements of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), the ADP Programme offered an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) in Mathematics and Science Studies matching a National Qualification Framework (NQF) Level 6 qualification.³

2. Project Partners

The ADP Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) - which was signed in 2002 - emphasises the project partners commitment to creating a public-private partnership that would combine the resources, expertise and knowledge of all partners to provide and manage education and training through web-based software platforms.⁴

However there is some contention about the partners involved in this public-private partnership. Table 1 below presents one version of the various parties involved in the partnership and the nature of their involvement in the project:

Table 1: Partners and Service Providers ⁵

³ ADP background document

⁴ ADP MoU Section 2.1, page 4

⁵ Source: Proposed ADP Project Partnership and Project Management Structure Presented by ADP Trust Sub-Committee (n.d., p. 3-10)

Organization	“ADP Partner Roles”
Northwest Education Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founding Partner • Provincial ICT Education Project • Educator Employer • Owner of Learning Centres at Secondary Schools • Provider of Education and Training Expertise • Project Funder • Contribution R7.5million
North-West University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founding Partner • Learning Service Provider • Enrolment of Learners • Certification of Learners • Learning Centre Owner • Provider of Expertise
GTZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founding Partner • International expert advice in terms of conceptual input and management skills • Provision of selected national and international seconded experts in development cooperation • Procure materials and equipment • Counterpart training • Linkage to Ministries (DoL, DoE) • ADP as part of GTZ-support in the overall skills development system reform process in South Africa • Financial Contribution: (R 4 million technical assistance, R 2 million as part of a PPP)
SAP Corporate Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founding Member • Learning Technology Provider • Provider of Learning Expertise • Project Funder • Estimated Contribution R5.4million
Paragon Development Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founding Partner • Learning Material Development Advisor • Networking

Organization	“ADP Partner Roles”
Siemens Business Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founding Partner • ASP Host • Estimated Contribution R1.5million
EDegree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Validate the ADP curriculum against the needs of the target learners in collaboration with University of Northwest.</i> ○ <i>Identify and appoint Subject Matter Experts (SME’s) in collaboration with University of Northwest.</i> ○ <i>Training of SME’s.</i> ○ <i>Instructional design of course content.</i> ○ <i>Development of e-learning content.</i> • Delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Learner training: Basic Computer Literacy and e-Learning Software.</i> ○ <i>Identify and appoint online facilitators.</i> ○ <i>Training of online facilitators.</i> ○ <i>Assessment: Formative and summative</i> ○ <i>User acceptance testing.</i> • Capacity Building • <u>Project Funder</u>: Estimated between R5million – R10million. • Return on investment from learner enrolment fees
Northwest Department of Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner of Communication Infrastructure • <u>Service Provider</u> (Call Centre) • Provider of Network Expertise • Estimated Contribution R ???
Duxbury Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise Network Experts • Estimated in kind contribution R900 000 • Networking equipment contributions R1million • <u>Distributor of Network Appliance – ADP partner</u> • Security, Storage and caching, routing, switching, policy based networking and network infrastructure specialists
Network Appliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Content Distribution Experts</u> • High Availability Unified Storage Systems Providers • <u>Project Funder</u> • Estimated Contribution R2.2million

The ADP background document (2004, p.2), also list all the players in Table 1 as part of the ADP public-private partnership and adds another name; AE Software Solutions.

The ADP MoU, on the other hand, declares (p.2) the partnership to be between: The University of North-West, The Department of Education of the North-West Province, SAP AG, GTZ and Paragon

Development Forum (Proprietary) Limited. It makes no mention of the Siemens Business Group, the Department of Finance of the North West Province, e-Degree, Duxbury Networking, Network Appliance and AE Software Solutions. However, later on page 4 the MoU does refer to an additional partner; Telkom South Africa Limited (“Telkom”).”

A power point slide prepared by Joachim Schaper and Danie Kok entitled *Public Private Partnership Projects in South Africa* (p. 11-12)⁶ offers yet another perspective. It identifies the University, the Department of Education, SAP, GTZ and Paragon Development Forum as partners and labels the University as “the owner”. In addition, it refers to Telkom and Siemens SA as “potential partners” along with Hewlett-Packard, Sentech and Alcatel Telecoms. It further names the “ADP Project Supporters” as: German Federal Ministry of Education and Research; BBiB (German Federal Institute for Vocational Training); UNEVOC (UNESCO’s specialised centre for technical and vocational education and training); Department of Communication; Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology; and National Research Foundation.

To what degree could this lack of clarity about partners, between partners and delivery providers and the actual “ownership” of the project, impact the partnership dynamics and the project? Some of these issues are discussed later in Section 4.

ADP Project Status- Milestones & Deliverables

The Africa Drive Project first saw the light of day in January 2001. To date much has been achieved.

January 2002 - June 2003: Project Preparation

Project planning was completed in June 2003 and included the following:

- ADP curriculum framework
- Partnership arrangements
- Project buy-in for all stakeholders, including trade unions
- Learning portal operational

July 2003 - December 2005: Project Implementation

Implementation commenced on 13 July 2003 and to date the following has been achieved:

The ADP learning portal has been commissioned.

All of the eight learning centres have opened:

- Vaal Reefs Technical High School in Orkney
- North West University Mafikeng Campus
- North West University Satellite Campus at Mankwe
- Baitiredi High School in Kuruman
- Baitshoki High School in Itsoseng
- Bathlaping High School in Taung
- Bakwena High School in Brits
- HF Tlou High School in Rustenburg

Formal learning, preceded by basic computer (keyboard and application skills) and educator exposure to a transformation intervention commenced on 19 July 2005.

Currently there are 170 active students enrolled in the ADP Project.
(Source: ADP Website, accessed August 2007)

3. Activities & Achievements

Martin Pieterse of Paragon Development Forum in his briefing notes (n.d.) captured the partners’ achievements in terms of project planning, management and delivery:

⁶ Referred to as SAP Corporate Research (n.d.) in the subsequent pages.

“Significant achievement has already been made with the programme: Project planning commenced in 2002 and was duly completed as scheduled- this includes the development of the ADP Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) curriculum framework; digital learning material; conceptual models; the establishment of eight planned pilot-learning centres and a national project office; partnership agreements and the creation of the non-profit ADP Education and Training Trust. A communication infrastructure is in place; a learning portal accessible from all centres has been instituted; and a learning material has been published for testing purposes. The first 185 educators (learners) have been enrolled- already revealing an abysmal lack of computer literacy, and the next phases embarked upon are introduction of a formal transformation and change management process vital to new leadership and management competencies within a democratic approach to school and classroom management and the selection and training of in situ of expert on-line facilitators.”

Most of the partners interviewed considered ADP to be a success and defined its success in the following terms:

- **ADP addressed the shortage of qualified teachers:** Dr Takalo from the University, considered the number of students trained through ADP to be an achievement in its own right. Casper Nel from SAP agreed adding that, “through ADP, 120 educators were trained in seven centres established in the North-West province and managed to attain an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) qualification in maths and science through a blended e-learning mechanism.” Abedenego Seakamela also remarked that the real success of ADP is “the [trained] educators who emerged more IT-literate and more confident in the use of ICT and some of them, have professionally grown in the area after having passed through ADP”.
- **Introduced innovative technologies and methods for education.** ADP was the first project of its kind in South Africa. Mr. Tolo from the Department of Education credited ADP for highlighting “the problem statement of poorly qualified teachers”. According to him, the project “laid the foundation for the curriculum that is the way forward; and confirmed that the problem (the shortage of qualified teachers) could be solved.” While Danie Kok of SAP argued that ADP “did test the envisioned concept of e-learning to train in-service educators, enabled the training of 120 teachers, and developed various training models”.
- **Developed the technological capacity of partner organisations.** According to Casper Nel of SAP, participation in ADP developed the technological capacity of individual partners such as SAP, which learnt a great deal through the partnership, including how to tackle the challenges of connectivity and how to adapt SAP technology to developing-world situations. Hennie Steyn from the University concurred, adding that through ADP the University not only learnt a lot about electronic delivery of education but was also able to prove its commitment to the community.
- **Influenced the public sector:** Mr. Seakamela explained that the Department of Education had benefited through its association with ADP: it is more broadly networked (to concerned stakeholders) than before; ADP contributed to modern education approaches in

- present-day South Africa as opposed to the Bantu education legacy of the Apartheid era; it also helped build the confidence of educators and there is a (perceived) improvement in student-pass-rates in high schools. Furthermore through ADP, ICT-based learning had emerged as a specific area for public sector expenditure.
- **Helped build the case for future cross-sector partnerships:** Casper Nel of SAP pointed out that through ADP, SAP was able to develop a strong relationship with the North-West Education Department, which won it 'good-mileage' with the government. According to Danie Kok, ADP gave private sector partners a chance to demonstrate their willingness and ability to address local development challenges and created the possibility of future public-private partnerships. Dr. Takalo added that as a public-private partnership that brought "like-minded people together" to realise their "shared objectives", ADP opened the door for future public-private collaborations.
 - **Offered inspiration and learning for the future projects:** According to Hennie Steyn because ADP demonstrated that its proposed training-delivery model can work and could be an effective way to deliver training to in-service educators, it may inspire similar projects in the future. While, Christian Merz from SAP Germany pointed out that "the lessons learnt, could be used for successful rollout and also in the design and implementation of other, similar projects in the future."

Despite most of the partners' testimony to the success of ADP there was some criticism. Werner Heitmann from GTZ was sceptical about what the project had achieved to date. He argued that ADP took nearly seven years and what it was able to deliver was training of the first-batch of teachers and testing of the models- which, in his opinion, could have been realised in a period of three years.

4. Challenges

Although the ADP partners were quick to point to the achievements of the partnership, they were equally candid about the challenges faced in developing, managing and delivering this project. The challenges and partnership shortcomings identified included:

- **Limited Public Sector Capacity:** According to the partners interviewed one of the major challenges faced by ADP was the lack of partnering and project management skills demonstrated by the public sector partners. Hennie Steyn argued that the public sector partners needed critical skills in two areas: "strategic competencies (to be able know what they want to do in the long term); and project management skills (to be able to work in a democratic/decentralised management style and not be the sole driver)". Danie Kok and De Wet Naude also identified the public sector partners' focus on short-term (urgent) priorities rather than long-term (strategic) issues as a shortcoming. While Dr. Takalo pointed to the lack of understanding within the Department of Education when it came to understanding how other sectors worked and stressed the need for a policy on how to engage in partnerships especially with the private sector.

Not only did the public sector partners demonstrate limited partnering and project management skills but also a lack of technical expertise required for a project of this nature. According to Werner Heitmann neither the North-West University nor the Department of Education had the specific technical expertise required for developing an e-learning curriculum.

- **Lack of Public Sector Resources:** The lack of partnering and project management skills among the public sector partners was further exacerbated by the lack of public-sector staff and funds dedicated to the partnership. Casper Nel of SAP contended that most of the staff from the North-West Education Department and the University involved in the partnership “did ADP as an extra job on top of their regular work”, while SAP had committed a fully dedicated expert (himself) to ADP whose performance evaluation was dependent on his work on the partnership. According to Mr. Zacharia Tolo, (formerly with the Department of Education), because of “this lack of office support, it appeared that ADP was run by volunteers; people who did ADP on top of their normal duties.” Aside from human resources, there was also much criticism of the lack of public sector funds allocated to ADP. Zacharia Tolo argued that sufficient public resources were not allocated for ADP: “This is the prerogative of the government who should have set aside dedicated funds in view of its strategic objectives on education.”⁷.
- **Lack of Public Sector Commitment to the Project:** According to Mr. Kok, although it was easy to get the public partners on board, it was difficult to make them discharge their responsibilities. To this end, he explained, there was reluctance/inability from the public partners in ‘giving content’ to the partnership; as a result of which ADP was eventually reduced to a SAP project. SAP took on multiple responsibilities: project management, provision of technological learning solutions and driving the development of a learning model.

Werner Heitmann of GTZ held the same view that the public partner was not in a position to take responsibility over ADP which resulted in SAP stepping in to fill the gap and to assume the “operational ownership”. Mr. Heitmann asserted that, with partnership projects, there should be a mechanism to ensure “strong local ownership”- and there should be pressure to ascertain timely takeover by the concerned partner.

Martin Pieterse of Paragon Development Forum considered the absence of the (National) Department of Education in the partnership to be crucial. In his opinion, it should have been a leading partner in ADP, as it has control over policies that affect ADP and similar initiatives in the country. He mentioned that the Department could have helped: by recognising ADP as a formal research and by assigning a ‘senior champion’ from the government to support the project.

Professor Hennie Steyn from North West University agreed that public sector commitment to the Project was not so readily available. He explained that because ADP was a totally new concept, it took time and effort to drum up public-sector support for the Project. According to him, at the beginning roughly 60% of the people involved (from the

⁷ Mr. Tolo makes reference to his Department’s endeavours to attract government support through a number of presentations on ADP given to government officials.

University) were committed to the idea of ADP, while the rest were either weary of this new concept, unsure if it was worth the time and money required or they did not have the time to dedicate to it. Even of those who were committed, 90% of them had neither the mandate nor the time to take this project forward. Yet despite the challenges the University eventually came through because it was politically important to support such community-education initiatives and because it they had committed its name to the project it felt compelled to follow-through despite resistance.

Abednego Seakamela of the North-West Department of Education painted a similar picture adding that although there was generally no problem of 'buy-in' for ADP within his Department it was a challenge to, to get some of the officials (lower than heads of departments) excited about the Project. According to him, this hesitation was due to a lack of understanding among officials on what ADP could deliver and a lack of communication about the nature of the project. The Department tried to overcome this hesitation through regular discussions at management meetings.

- **Differences between Private and Public Sector partners:** According to Mr. Tolo there is still a need to work on the different cultures of the private and the public sector in South Africa so as to create the necessary synergy that enables efficient partnerships. He explained that the differences in the styles of operation between the private and the public sectors were noteworthy. According to him the 'bureaucratic hamstrings' of the public sector were not convenient for the private partners. Dr. Takalo also made reference to the challenges of building a cross-sector partnership between the government and the private sector, adding that turn-around of decision making is slow within the public sector as compared to the private sector, which in her opinion could be an area of 'unease' when the two sectors partner. Then there is the issue of trust or lack there-of between the sectors, which was raised by Hennie Steyn from the University.
- **Friction between partners:** Given the number of partners involved in ADP it was not surprising that there were some issues between partners which impacted the project itself. For example, Mr Seakaamela from the North West Department of Education made reference to the curriculum developed by the University which in his opinion was not in line with the Department's expectations. Seakamela argued that there were different understandings about the concept of "blended learning" as defined by the North-West University and by his Department, that demonstrated a lack of shared vision between the two partners.

Then there was the issue of the capability of e-Degree- the online service provider chosen to develop e-content for the project. Both Mr Seakamela from the Department and Christian Merz from SAP felt that e-Degree did not have the expertise needed to do the job. Mr. Merz argued that the problem could have been resolved by bringing in a qualified, international service provider on e-content development or by making e-Degree a 'full risk-sharing' partner. But this was not done.

Deon van Wyk of e-Degree conceded that there were problems but defended e-Degree's role by arguing e-Degree was assigned to develop online material and digitalise it although it is not an expert on the subject matter. As a result, they had to out-source the work to a

third-party. He maintains that because the University was the final authority on approving the content the University should have resolved the matter. Instead, according to him, the merging of the two campuses led to different opinions within the University which caused further delays.

Martin Pieterse of Paragon Development Forum raised the issue of cross-cultural and their impact on the effectiveness of the partnership. He made reference to a GTZ Germany expert who participated in the partnership without a clear understanding of local issues. According to Mr. Pieterse, this particular expert's lack of "local content" was a matter of concern at the time.

There were also some legal issues between SAP and GTZ relating to the protection of intellectual property rights that required lengthy negotiations between the two organisations and caused delays in the project.

- **Private Sector Limitations:** Werner Heitmann of GTZ was, in general, very sceptical about the private sector's ability to understand and support development issues. He attributed this to a "lack of capacity", on part of the private sector whose real focus and "hidden agenda" in his opinion is profit maximization. Christian Merz from SAP also made a similar observation with reference to SAP's role in the partnership. He argued that while SAP was effective in carrying out research projects, it required more insight to manage development-oriented projects like ADP. Although Mr. Merz felt that SAP overcame this shortcoming, eventually his admission does raise issues about the capacity of SAP to take on the responsibility of a development project.
- **Lack of an Enabling Environment for Public-Private Partnerships:** According to Mr. Kok "The general environment was not supportive of innovative approaches such as those used in ADP. An enabling environment should be created for innovation to be introduced and sustained", he says. He believes that if similar partnerships were to run smoothly in the future, a process of transformation is necessary to do-away with prejudice and processes working against innovation. This could be done by "capacitating people and systems to be flexible and to embrace innovation – doing different things and things differently to improve learning and teaching." These interventions are essential especially for public partners, who are less flexible and seemingly unable to manage change/innovation effectively and efficiently, Danie Kok asserts.
Mr. Seakamela identified a specific legal concern for the public sector as regards partnering: the Auditor General [of SA] requires that Trusts which are set-up to administer funds should be fully-fledged public entities as per the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) of South Africa. He argued that, more clarity is required on the implications of PFMA for partnerships.
- **Limited Resources:** "Because of its capital intensive nature, ADP required significant investment but unfortunately did not "readily attract the enthusiastic patronage of the local donor fraternity, who usually tend to prefer the more 'colourful' and immediately visible quick-fix projects. Long term endeavours, such as ADP, that can eventually impact

significantly on the future of education on the African continent seem to appear to have no real donor 'sex' appeal."⁸

According to Danie Kok, the problem should have been addressed in the partnership contract by making explicit the financial contributions of all partners along with the deliverables expected from each partner. Furthermore, project costs should have been determined based on actual demand and as much as possible through detailed estimates. Instead, ADP's resourcing, according to Mr. Kok, was rather supply-driven and in most instances based on guesstimates. Mr. Kok also raises the issue of GTZ's approach to resourcing based on the traditional PPP, supply-driven style⁹ which according to him was beset with a lack of flexibility. Mr Merz from SAP agrees adding that GTZ's funding time-frame of 3 years was not always sufficient for introducing ICT.

According to Mr. Merz, ADP performed especially well in the later phase of the project after the actual PPP ended. As a solution he suggested that the European Union funding model within Framework Program 6 and 7 of partnerships that are based on a 50-50 cost resourcing model. This, Mr. Merz argues, could be one approach that deserves further investigation for possible modification and adoption in South Africa in the future.

Mr. Heitmann explains GTZ's position arguing that the agency's contribution is sourced from the German ministry, BMZ¹⁰. He describes the role of his organization as supporting/kick-starting the initial phase of PPPs (including ADP) for a period not more than 36 months according to rules stipulated by the BMZ. After the first three years, the PPP is expected to be concluded with subsequent ownership by the private partner. This, he says, was not the case with ADP. He also raises the issue of funding and points the finger at SAP saying that contributions from the private sector were characterized by inflated estimates. In his opinion, the ADP was a mechanism for SAP to carryout "funded research work"- financed by GTZ and the public partner.

Financing – or the lack of it – was an issue raised by many partners including Dr. Takalo who added that the University had to come up with 'creative ways' to raise the money, for example waiving the registration fees of the educators. Christian Merz added that having to raise money for ADP when the project was already underway put extra pressure on the partners and their resources.

- **Technological Issues:** Casper Nel described connectivity¹¹ to be a crucial constraint. He emphasized that although all alternatives were identified and explored in due course, this should have been anticipated in advance and addressed at the early-phases of ADP.

⁸ Briefing note compiled by Martin Pieterse, Founder Trustee of ADP, Pretoria.

⁹ According, to Mr. Kok, an example for a "supply-driven" resourcing [adopted by GTZ] was 200 000 Euros over a period of two years, while ADP in actual fact has entered its four-and-half years.

¹⁰ BMZ is the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

¹¹ Connectivity refers to a program or device's ability to link with other programs and devices. For example, a program that can import data from a wide variety of other programs and can export data in many different formats is said to have good connectivity. However, computers that have difficulty linking into a network (many laptop computers, for example) have poor connectivity.

Source: Informatica (2007). *Technical glossary- Connectivity*. On-line Available:

www.informatica.com/solutions/resource_center/glossary/default.htm [10 August, 2007]

Christian Merz also raised the issue of the lack of communication infrastructure available in South Africa as a considerable constraint. This, he says, was overcome through innovative solutions such as caching¹² mechanisms, data compressing, and offline solutions. While Graham Duxbury of Duxbury Networking highlighted the importance of having enough band-width to support e-learning cost effectively as a technical challenge faced by ADP.

The partners also raised a number of technical challenges which needed to be addressed if ADP was to continue and expand. These include the need for better regional communication infrastructure if ADP is to be rolled out in the SADC region or Africa-wide. Connectivity was also a key concern and ADP partners and service providers seemed to have a range of potential solutions. Graham Duxbury, for instance, argued that cellular (GSM) based technology, which has become more affordable in recent years could be one alternative. Since GSM is a broadband solution, no further costs are involved once the required information is downloaded by the educator, plus it is much faster than dial-up solutions. Raymond Mclean of BCSNet¹³ favoured satellite connectivity over GSM because in his opinion while GSM and data compression options are getting cheaper in South Africa, this might not be the case for the rest of Africa.

Eloff Scholtz, from the North-West Province IT Directorate, compared cell phone, landline and satellite connectivity. According to him, cell phone connectivity has wider coverage and has relatively lower connection fee as one has to pay for information downloaded. Landlines on the other hand, are reliable but more expensive than cell phone connectivity as one has to pay flat rates. Satellite connectivity, although it offers wide-coverage, is about two-to-three times more expensive than landlines; therefore, it should only be used in situations where the other two are not applicable. He argued that since the band-width requirement of ADP was not that high, cell phone and satellite connectivity are the two options to choose from if ADP is to be rolled-out Africa wide. Casper Nel agreed adding that satellite connectivity could be an option assuming there are sufficient sites to make it financially viable.

- **Challenges Relating to Project Management and Implementation:** According to Abednego Seakamela, the main implementation challenges faced were issues around curriculum development which emanate from the project conceptualization phase. However, he indicates that further complications arose during implementation as the Mafikeng Campus of the University (which did the conceptualisation) merged with the Potchefestroom Campus in the middle of the project lifetime.

¹² Cache is a form of temporary storage. Cache may be a form of physical memory that serves to improve system performance by moving frequently used data close to the requesting component (CPU, RAM, and so forth). A cache can also be created in software, where a cache or proxy server holds a temporary copy of the most commonly requested Web pages in RAM or on a hard disk drive. It reduces traffic on a Web server by intercepting and responding to HTTP requests for pages held in the cache. Source: WestNet Learning. (2007). *Cache*. [On-line] Available: <http://glossary.westnetinc.com/term.php?termId=4338>[10 August, 2007]

¹³ Raymond Mclean explains that BCSNet's engagement was through Siemens. The latter pays BCSNet to host servers required for ADP

Casper Nel highlighted the need to focus on ‘understanding the customer’ before partnering. According to him “It could have helped if the concerned project experts had a chance to join the beneficiaries (the educators) and experience what they face on a day-to-day basis.” As it turned out in practice, Mr. Nel explains, some educators have to travel as far as 300 km¹⁴ to access ADP learning centres, which was not at all the expectation.

Zacharia Tolo identified other operational challenges faced by the Department in implementing ADP. First, there was the question of how to identify the educators that needed to be trained? Once identified, the educators did not understand¹⁵ why they needed to be trained and asked what the training benefits would be in terms of promotion and salary increments. According to Mr Tolo, the Department addressed these issues by adopting an ‘effective communication’ strategy and by involving all heads of the concerned directorates. Mr. Tolo also mentioned logistical hurdles such as: How do you remove the trainees (educators) from their normal duty and where do you train them? To address this, he explained, an attempt was made to establish centres and cluster them optimally as much as possible.

Mr. Seakamela considered project management as an area for improvement. In his opinion there should have been a dedicated unit for project management (of partnerships) since outsourcing this to a service provider was costly. Danie Kok also raised the lack of skills in project management as an area of concern adding that there is a need for “changing the way in which people think projects work”. According to him “There is a need to train people involved in partnerships on project management covering all phases- from inception to institutionalisation.” In addition to this, Danie Kok, claims that there should be mechanisms to make those engaged more accountable and responsible.

According to Casper Nel, PCA, ADP’s project management consultant was contracted two years after the partnership kicked off and it would have helped a lot had they been brought in earlier. De Wet Naude of PCA explained that the need to bring an external project manager was felt late and as a result, PCA was brought on board on the 1st of August 2005 and would continue its duties till closure of ADP on the 31st of July 2007. Based on his experiences as a project consultant, Mr. Naude raised two issues of concern regarding the management of the ADP partnership. First, all project participants were only available for ADP when they were relieved from their normal duties and second, there was a lack of clarity regarding *what the actual responsibility/contribution of the public partner* was. In his opinion, for the project and the partnership to succeed, roles must be clearly specified, quantified, and communicated at all levels. He added that communication break-down between the executive and operation (middle-management) levels also needed to be rectified.

The scale of the project also posed a challenge for the partners. According to Dr. Takalo, many of the ‘capacity constraints’ from their side were due, in large part, to the sheer magnitude of the ADP project.

¹⁴ Unduly long distances to learning centres is also one problem which Martin Pieterse describes.

¹⁵ Zacharia Tolo recalls that there were attitudinal challenges as well. The mere invitation for participation in the training through ADP was differently interpreted by some Educators: *Am I not qualified enough?*

Claudia Petersen from the University highlighted challenges around communication. In her opinion, although the partnership worked at the strategic level, implementation proved difficult as project priorities were not effectively communicated further down the hierarchy. Another area she considered crucial was the lack of “a good sense of handover” when involved staff left especially within the Department of Education. Still another hurdle she cited was the impact of University regulations on the project. ADP, she says, was intended to offer flexibility while University rules required that one should strictly observe academic calendars.

5. Looking to the Future

Considering the range of challenges encountered in implementing ADP, the project partners were asked whether they thought the partnership should be sustained, expanded or terminated. All the partners seemed to agree that the partnership should continue but raised a number of issues that must be taken into account going forward including:

- **Technological concerns:** On the possibility of replicating similar partnerships in the future, Mr. Heitmann, considered the technological preconditions to be limiting. According to him, “The public partner (owner) should search for cheaper local solutions, customized e-learning platforms, if similar initiatives are to be sustainable in the long term.” Mr. Heitmann gives the example of the Global Trade Training (GTT) partnership in South Africa (in which GTZ is also involved), which in his opinion is working very well. According to him, one of the main reasons for GTT’s success/sustainability was the ‘use of local e-learning platform’.
- **Securing long-term Public Sector Commitment:** According to De Wet Naude the ADP partnership model is replicable and could be sustainable but he puts an important precondition on its success: the public partner needs to adopt a more long-term view in order for innovative approaches such as ADP to thrive. They also need to free capacity (resources) which should then work on such long-term issues and by extension on partnerships. According to Mr Tolo, “ADP should not be viewed as a one time event” but as on-going endeavour to address long-standing societal problems to meet long-term objectives around education. Hence, it needs to be supported with proper leadership, commitment and injection of financial resources. To him, ADP was one indication that the South African government had rightly recognised that it cannot address the multi-pronged problems around education by itself; and as such it opens the door for future public-private partnerships.
- **Revisiting the Partnership Model:** Many of the public sector partners raised the issue of revisiting the ADP partnership model going forward. For example Dr Takalo said that in her opinion, there was a need to revisit (reconceptualise) ADP to make the rollout successful, particularly the cost model. She believes that that ADP should not be a one-off event but should be rolled out as far wide as possible and was confident that there is community support for the concept which has been supported by unions in the country. Abendnego Seakamela from the Department of Education agrees that the outcomes of ADP should be replicated. In his opinion ADP was an experimental/pilot programme

designed to test the various models developed and it is the outcomes (final products) which must be rolled out rather than ADP itself.

According to Hennie Steyn, the training delivery tested by ADP is sustainable. In his opinion, the determining factors for success going forward are: identifying the right owner; commitment from the partners; and the need to have clear contractual agreements on roles and responsibilities. He further argued that future ownership should be with the University – rather than the Department – because it is University which is mandated to issue certificates and to generate income through education and training.

Claudia Petersen agrees that there is a lack of clarity about the ownership of ADP. In her opinion, the University is the rightful owner to the programme. She argues: the University has the power of accreditation of courses; decides on content; and has the required physical infrastructure.

Abednego Seakamela agrees emphasising that the University should build the model as its own programme although the Department is where the demand is- it brings in the educators that need to be trained. He further explained that until now, the Department has covered almost all of the costs for training of educators except transportation- which is covered by the trainees themselves. He believes that there is a very high probability that the Department can subsidize the initiative in its early years of roll-out; but, he argues that before that can be done, the University needs to address the inconsistencies/problems around curriculum and accreditation.

Claudia Petersen also raised the issue of evaluating the cost effectiveness of the ADP method of academic delivery and the need to clarify the University's mandate on regular face-to-face delivery versus (the new) distance, e-learning that ADP requires.

- **Ensuring financial sustainability:** Mr Heitmann raised doubts as to whether ADP could continue as a financially self-reliant project; he believes that continued, external funding from the public partner would be required. Casper Nel and Claudia Petersen also highlighted the need to refine the ADP business and cost model to ensure continued financial sustainability.

Interviewee List

Duxbury, Graham. (2007, July 20). Face to face interview. Member, ADP Board of Trustees [and Managing Director, Duxbury Networking]. Johannesburg

Heitmann, Werner. (2007, July 20). Face to face interview, Focal Area Coordinator, Skills Development & Marketing Issues, GTZ South Africa. Pretoria

Kok, Danie. (2007, July 18). Face to face interview. ADP Project Manager [and Director, SAP Research CEC Pretoria]. Pretoria

Mclean, Raymond. (2007, July 20). Face to face interview. BCSNet. Johannesburg

Merz, Christian. (2007, July 20) Telephonic interview. Project Co-ordinator, Learning Management System of ADP, SAP Research AG, Germany

Naude, De Wet. (2007, July 18). Face to face interview. Project manager, Project Convergence Alliance [Development Manager, SAP Research CEC Pretoria]. Pretoria

Nel, Casper. (2007, July 18). Face to face interview. IT Specialist, SAP Research CEC Pretoria. Pretoria

Pieterse, Martin. (2007, July 18). Face to face interview. Founder Trustee, ADP Education and Training Trust (Paragon Development Forum). Pretoria

Pietersen, Claudia. (2007, July 27). Face to face interview. Project Manager, Technology Model of ADP Project, North-West University- MafikengCampus. Mafikeng

Scholtz, Eloff (2007, July 27). Face to face interview. Technical Advisor, North-West Province IT Directorate. Mafikeng

Seakamela, Abednego (2007, July 27). Face to face interview. Deputy Director-General, North-West Province Department of Education. Mafikeng

Steyn, Hennie. (2007, July 25). Face to face interview. Former Dean, Faculty of Education sciences, North-West University- Potchefstroom Campus. Potchefstroom

Takalo, MN. (2007, July 25). Face to face interview. Vice Principal, North West University- Potchefstroom Campus. Potchefstroom

Tolo, ZP (2007, July 27). Face to face interview. Former MEC, North-West Province Department of Education [currently Chief Executive Officer, North West Housing Corporation]. Mafikeng

Van Aswegen, Limpie. (2007, July 25) Face to face interview. North-West University- Potchefstroom Campus. Potchefstroom

Van Wyk, Deon. (2007, July 20). Face to face interview. Executive Director, E-degree. [currently with ADvTECH House. Johannesburg

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APPENDIX 1

Contact Details

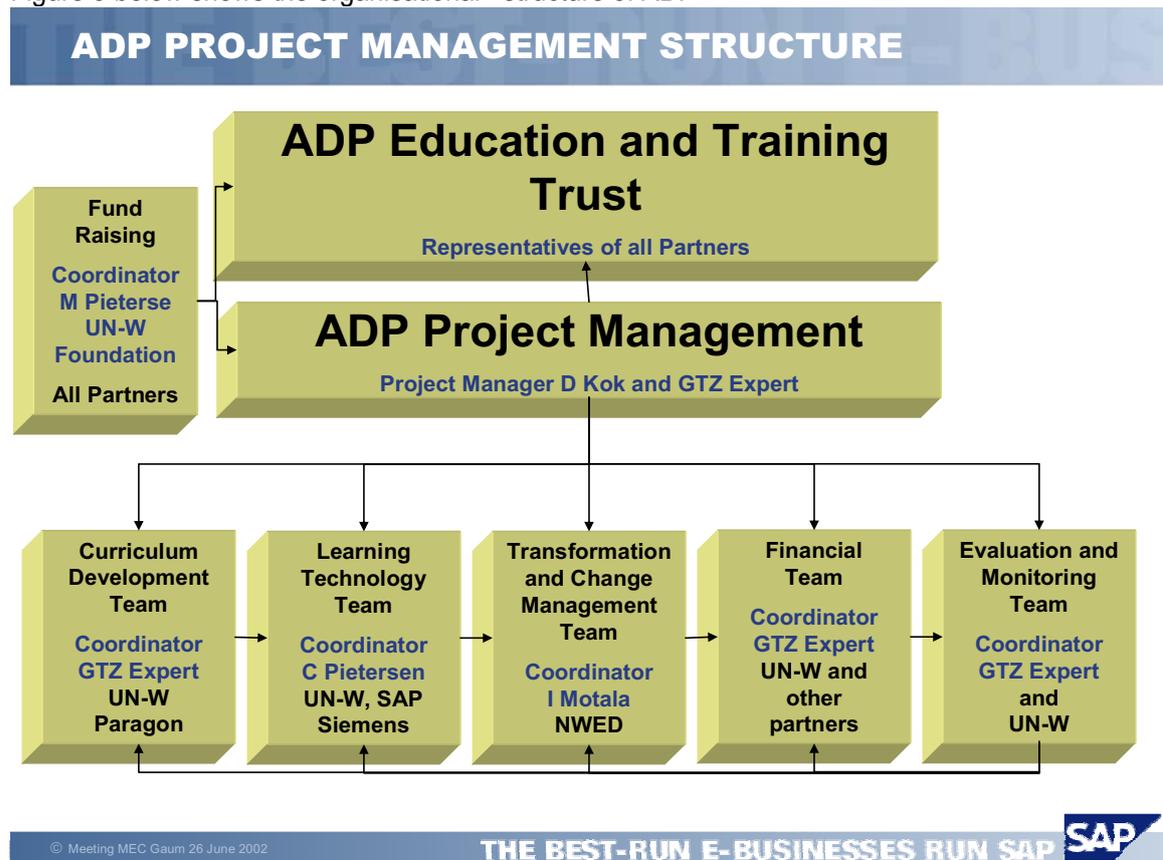
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APPENDIX 2

MONITORING & EVALUATION (Section deleted from Original Resource Case)

Figure 3 below shows the organisational structure of ADP



Source: SAP (MEC Meeting, 2002)

Casper Nel describes the four task teams of ADP as: the Technology Model Team; Learning Model Team; Business Case Team; and Transformation & Change Management. These task teams, he explains, manage the partnership and are accountable to the ADP trust.

According to Danie Kok, Monitoring and Evaluation of ADP takes place in a number of ways. He says that, review interventions include both internal and external. Internally, evaluation is done by SAP on annual basis whereas one external evaluation has been done so far in February 2007. He also highlights that academic quality assurance is done by the North-West University. Furthermore, Mr. Kok explains, there have been smaller, ad-hoc interventions for specific and technical issues. One such instance was where IT students were brought to assist with evaluating 'usability of technology', he mentions.

Martin Pieterse identifies the two types of accountability relevant to ADP as financial and project. He further explains that financial records are accounted in the normal way and reported to the ADP trust regularly. 'Project accountability', he says, is ensured through external evaluation by calling-in the appropriate experts. In his briefing note he writes:

To ensure objectivity and to verify results achieved with the Pilot Project, evaluations are conducted by independent bodies, the results of which will serve to assess the impact of the new learning strategies on the quality of learning delivered to learners. Evaluation is done in respect of all the areas of the project: such as learning content, technology, connectivity, learner performance, learning mix, cost of delivery, behaviour of learners, layout and functionality of learning centres, role of facilitators, impact on community, learners, educators, developed models and project partners. Early indicators are that the ADP blended learning will be more cost-effective than traditional in-service teaching training.

Werner Heitmann recalls that in the initial 2-3 years of ADP, local consultants were hired to carry out M&E as the public partner lacked capacity to run the project. He also explains that the final evaluation currently underway is part of ADP's M&E- for which the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University was commissioned by the ADP Trust to carryout the job.

De Wet Naude also identifies two forms of accountability, financial and project. On the financial side, he says, ADP has its own bank account which is audited by qualified financial auditors. Project accountability, he says, is discharged through the task teams. The task teams report regularly in Trust meetings while Project Convergence Alliance (PCA)¹ submits a full status report every quarter (including a financial report) - also according to Mr. Naude. The fact that the ADP Trust was established as a legal entity is an excellent way of ensuring accountability, he argues.

¹PCA is ADP's project management consultant represented by Mr. De Wet Naude in this case study.