



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA



***Relational leadership practices in
interorganisational partnership settings:
Implications for public sector MEL***

Presenter: Stanley Ntakumba,
Chief Director @RSA Presidency & PhD Student @UP

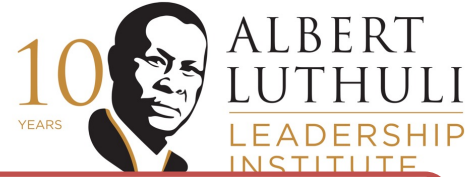
Reimagine Leadership

www.up.ac.za/alli



1. Introduction
2. Research Design
3. In-country case study
4. Multi-country Case study
5. Implications for horizontal leadership for MEL

Introduction



Background

- The paper draws from on-going research focusing on relational leadership practices as socially constructed phenomena in inter-organizational partnership settings.

Scope

- The scope of this paper is on presenting emerging insights about leadership practices in inter-organisational partnership contexts using two case studies: international case study (multiple countries) and local case study (in-country)

Gaps

- Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien (2012) identified the need for more research on leadership as a relational and “collective phenomenon”.
- Endres & Weibler (2020:276) observed the dearth of leadership studies that examine the leadership phenomenon in inter-organisational partnership contexts. They also argue that, instead in such settings leadership gets “mentioned but rarely studied empirically”.
- The notion of ‘horizontal leadership’ is viewed as part of the post-heroic conceptualization of leadership

Question

- For purposes of this conference, the discussion question is: **what are the implications of relational leadership practices for monitoring, evaluation and learning practice in the public sector?**

Research Design



▶ Theoretical Framework

In terms of relational social constructionist onto-epistemology, the focus is on social relations where leadership is known from within as a micro-level process through which meaning-making is socially constructed through narration, dialogue and reflection in an intersubjective way, taking into consideration the impact of context in a relational manner (Dachler & Hosking, 1995; Uhl-Bien, 2006; Cunliffe, 2011; Wolfram Cox & Hassard, 2018)

▶ Practice Approach

Ospina & Foldy (2010:303) asserted that the practice approach is a better way of operationalising “social construction of leadership since... it provides a way to breakdown the joint work they [leaders] engage in to accomplish their mission”.

▶ In-depth Interviews and Focus Groups

- National Anti-Corruption Strategy: members of the interdepartmental steering committee
- Twende Mbele: past and present members of the various committees and the secretariat

▶ Abductive logic

The abductive form of enquiry combines both the deductive and inductive approaches in an iterative manner as applied by Sklaventi (2020:552) in his analysis of leadership practices, which was carried out “abductively from the empirical material to the empirically grounded constructs”.

NATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION STRATEGY CASE STUDY

Format of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy

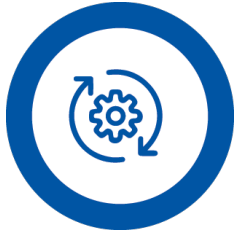


Part A. Strategy document

Approved by Cabinet on 18 November 2020

NACS Document covers the following:

Context, Existing Measures, the Strategy Content, Institutional Arrangements, Timeframes for Implementation, and Review and Reporting,
Eight (8) appendices with additional information



Part B. Implementation Plan



Implementation Monitoring Framework

Draft excel tables for consideration by NACAC



Part C. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework



The Process of Developing the National Anti-Corruption Strategy



PHASE 1: 2016 - 2017

Conceptualisation:

- Literature review
- Research
- Focused Consultations
- Awareness Raising
- Conceptual Framework
- Create channel for Public Input

Output:

1. Diagnostic Report (released december 2016)
2. Discussion Document (released May 2017)

PHASE 1: 2016 - 2017

Public Consultation:

- National Workshops
- Nine (9) Provincial Public participation workshops
- Additional expert consultation

Output:

1. Draft strategy document
2. Draft implementation plan

PHASE 3: 2019 - 2020

Finalisation:

- Quality assurance
- Content refinement
- Establishment of multi-sectoral Reference group (constituted September 2019)

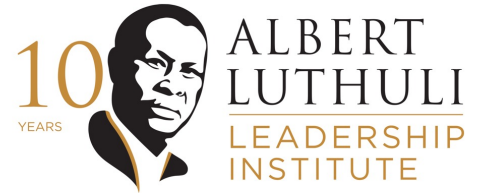
Output:

1. Draft M&E framework
2. Strategy document

INTERDEPARTMENTAL STEERING COMMITTEE

REFERENCE GROUP

NACS reflection on implications for horizontal leadership of public sector MEL practice



1. Negotiated common purpose
2. Integration via breaking silos horizontally, vertically and diagonally
3. Coordinated effort by interfacing with all key stakeholders
4. Sustained process through dialogues and exit strategy
5. Accountability through consideration by higher authorities and use of evidence in decision-making
6. Building trust is critical in an environment where public institutions are experiencing low levels of trust from the citizenry.

TWENDE MBELE CASE STUDY

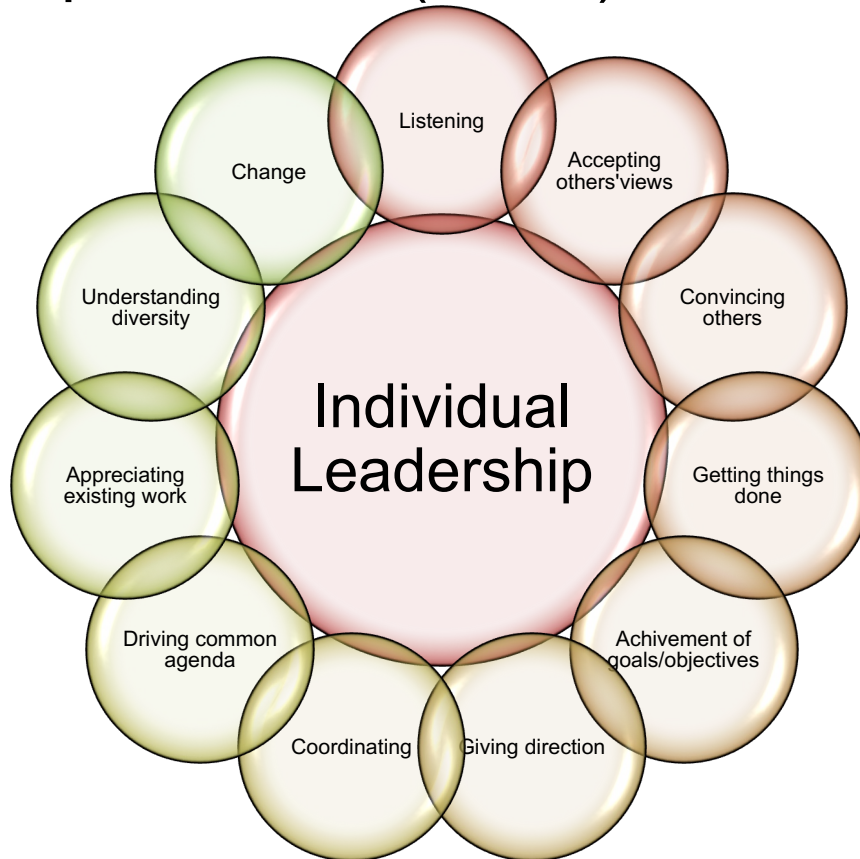
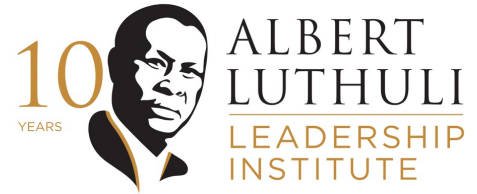


About TM



- TM comprises six African countries, two evaluation capacity development bodies (ECBs) and is hosted by the University of Witwatersrand.
 - The countries are: Benin, Uganda, Ghana, South Africa, Niger and Kenya.
 - The ECBs are: Independent Evaluation Development: African Development Bank- IDEV:AfDB, and 'Center for Learning in Evaluation and Results – Anglophone Africa': CLEAR-AA.
- More details about TM are found in this paper:
 - *Goldman, I., Byamugisha, A., Gounou, A., Smith, L.R., Ntakumba, S., Lubanga, T., & Rot-Munstermann, K. (2018). The emergence of government evaluation systems in Africa: The case of Benin, Uganda and South Africa. African Evaluation Journal. 6(1).*

Respondent views about the definition of the leadership construct (1 of 2)



Respondent views about the definition of the leadership construct (2 of 2)



Leadership practice 1: Leading-with-accountability



Leadership practice 2: **Leading-as-dialogue**

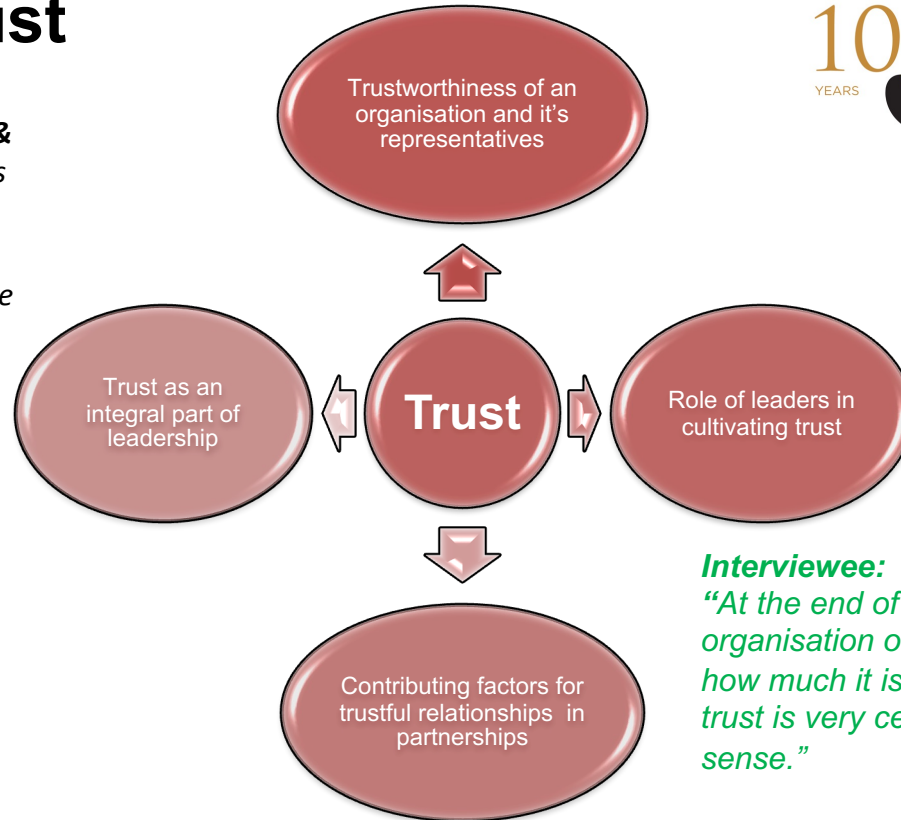
- The practice of leading-as-dialogue came up in relation to the role of leaders in terms of facilitating conversations in order to bridge cultural differences.
- For instance, one interactant observed that:

“Although we have a common Twende Mbele identity, there are slight cultural differences among the countries. Some are more hierarchical than others. In my experience, the chair has always had a good sense of what could be shared, getting people to talk to each other and maintain bonds.”
- In this regard, dialogue served to strengthen “common identity” while recognising and appreciating differences. The agency of the chairperson is also highlighted in terms of “getting people to talk to each other”, which is about dialogue.
- Similar dialogic practices were highlighted in relation to bridging the language divide between Francophone and Anglophone countries via use of champions and translation.
- These findings are aligned to the social constructionist leadership scholarship by Hersted and Gergen (2013:310) who posit that: *“...dialogue is at the centre of organizational life...In relational leading the dialogic process is the central concern.”*

Leadership practice 2: Leading-with-trust



Citing many scholars, Sanchez, Ospina & Salgado (2020:9) argue that: “Trust has been identified as key to understanding relational leadership (Reid and Karambayya, 2016). Most scholars agree that leadership and trust are both ontologically relational phenomena (Drath et al., 2008; Ford and Lawler, 2007; Weber and Carter, 2003).”



Interviewee:
“At the end of the day, the value of an organisation or institution is measured by how much it is trusted. So, the issue of trust is very central to leadership in this sense.”

Various dimensions of the ‘trust’ construct as demonstrated by the empirical findings

TM findings implications for horizontal leadership of public sector MEL practice



- There is no single definition of leadership both in theory and practice.
- Definitions of a leader/leadership tend to be normative and idealistic, whilst practice demonstrates varied experiences: trust, dialogue, accountability and a mixture of positional and collective leadership approaches.
- More empirical work (incl. MEL) is required in terms of understanding the implications of 'horizontal leadership' in light of the diversity of ways of organizing: bureaucracies, partnerships/networks and joined-up modes.
- Leadership scholarship has embraced the post-heroic leadership paradigm, and the public sector MEL has an opportunity to start applying those ideas where they could improve organizational performance.

Thank you!



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA



Rethinking Leadership

How to cite this presentation:

Ntakumba, S, & de Jongh, D. (2022) *Implications of relational leadership practices in inter-organisational partnership settings for public sector monitoring, evaluation and learning. Panel Presentation at the Conference of the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association, 22 September 2022.*