

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING NETWORKS IN ACTION: LESSONS FROM EAST AFRICA

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PROFESSIONAL LEARNING NETWORKS IN ACTION: LESSONS FROM EAST AFRICA EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Aga Khan Foundation Canada and Global Affairs Canada supported a five-year project to strengthen teacher education and support systems to improve learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy at pre-primary and primary school levels in target areas of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda (Strengthening Education Systems in East Africa - SESEA¹). The Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa provides high quality professional development programs for practicing teachers through the Academy's Professional Development Center (PDC). The PDC has extended its outreach programs for practicing head teachers and classroom teachers through the creation of four

3. *Support change and improvement*

School leader PLNs used protocols for event planning and strategic planning acquired in their PDC training programs. These leadership tools and skills were not so strongly in evidence in teacher network meetings.

Overall, school leaders have access to school resources and the power to make decisions for their

School Leader Outcomes: Professional Practice

Head teacher PLN members identified three categories of outcomes related to professional practice:

- (1) *School management practices* – School leaders spoke of modest improvements in basic managerial practices as a learning outcome (time management, running staff meetings, creating school activity schedules)

The findings provide evidence that teacher participation in the PLNs has significantly influenced teacher implementation of teaching and learning methods introduced in their PDC training. The extent to which PLN participation has contributed to *further* development of teacher expertise in the use of these methods seems limited. That potential could be exploited more intentionally.

2. *Strengthening the bias for action*

Integration with the School System

9. School system recognition and reward for PLN participation.

The professional motivation for joining and remaining active in the PLNs would be enhanced by formal recognition and accreditation of participation in the PLNs. Implementation of this recommendation would require procedures for accrediting professional learning activities associated with the work of the PLNs, as well as the kinds of evidence of learning that individual members could incorporate into professional portfolios.

10. Expanding membership in the PLNs

Increased membership in the PLNs is not guaranteed; some PSd0 1 35ETB1 0 0 1 248.93 63.98 Tm(pr)-317c(Sd0 1