

LOG-IN Africa First Methodology Workshop

Tangier, Morocco, 8-10 June 2006

Aide Memoire

Introduction: “setting the stage”

The present document outlines the workshop Rationale and should be considered as a “guideline” to be followed to facilitate the discussion during the various sessions of the meeting.

LOGIN Africa is currently a distributed “network of researchers” working in the broad area of e-Local Governance. The intention with LOGIN Africa is to facilitate the creation of a “research network” with considerable degrees of mutual support, research synergies and ultimately collaborative research activities and research outcomes. The Network consists of a range of researchers, each with their own professional background, training and experience, working in a variety of locally specific institutional and national contexts however, through the network there is the intention that a common baseline be established and that a variety of common data elements (outcome indicators) be identified and collected.

While respecting the individuality of the respective researchers/research teams the longer term intention is to create a common overall e-local governance framework within which each of the individual research activities can be “nested” and through which the individual projects can be linked to the variety of other on-going projects. In this way they will constitute a broader basis for moving towards an empirically grounded e-local governance “Roadmap” of value both nationally and on a Pan-African basis.

It is recognized that there is not a single solution to the challenge of e-local governance nor is there a single research methodology nor a single conceptual framework available at this time that will illuminate the variety of local circumstances within Africa or LOGIN Africa. However, each of the projects within LOGIN are making and will make a contribution to the overall Roadmap(s) as it/they emerge and it is the challenge of the network to ensure both the validity and significance of the individual research activities and to ensure that these are linked and aggregated in a manner so as to ensure a Pan-African validity and significance as well.

Session I: Overview of the LOG-IN Africa Research Methodological Approach and Assessment Framework

Session Rationale:

This session will provide an introduction to the discussion concerning an overall LOGIN Research Methodology both through an overview by MG and by presentations on specific areas of particular significance in the development of the LOGIN Research Methodology and its applications and implications for individual research projects and for the overall Pan-Africa research integration.

Session Objectives:

1. to introduce the overall Research (*network of researchers*) approach
2. to discuss the on-going development of the LOGIN *research network*
3. to introduce and discuss three key elements for framing the network and to identify areas of convergence and divergence within these from the perspective of the national and the Pan-African LOGIN research.
 - a. conceptual framework
 - b. research methods
 - c. analytical approaches
4. to review and finalize the amended draft Pan-African Assessment Framework

Session Facilitation:

1. MG will provide an overview and introduction to the session and to the subject area
2. MG will introduce each of the specific topic areas to be presented by individual national researchers/research teams—15 minutes of presentation with 15 minutes of plenary discussion. Presenters will be asked to briefly present their experience in each of these areas, raise questions, and give examples directions rather than to provide definitive statements. The discussion will focus on the significance of these questions for national research and work toward a common position concerning the Pan-African research.
3. MG and AK will present the revised draft of the Pan-African Assessment Framework. The amended drafts will be circulated to the research teams by email in advance and will be available in hard copy as part of the Workshop kit, including comments received. The discussion will be directed towards finalizing these documents as background for on-going research. The session will also be useful to begin discussion on outcome assessment indicators at both National and Pan-African level.

Working Lunch on Network's Operationalization (Separate Agenda)

Session Rationale:

Roundtable discussion to discuss how the Network will operate.

Topic Areas:

1. Communications: e-lists, e-forum, teleconferences, Skype, Website (including content, inputting, etc.);
2. Reporting, monitoring and evaluation
3. Other issues to be defined according to NRT needs and proposals.

Session II: Overview of the state of LOG-IN Africa participating countries' Research Proposals and Activities (as they impact on research questions and issues of interest for the LOGIN Africa Research Network)

Session Rationale:

This session will give each team the opportunity to update the network on activities and developments since the Nairobi meeting and particularly in the context of the launching of the LOGIN project. What issues have arisen or are anticipated in the local research activities in relation to the network and the Pan-African research and in the linkage between the national research and on-going national e-local governance activities (the RoadMap).

Session Objectives:

1. to give each team a chance to update their colleagues and to learn from their colleagues any developments to date.
2. to begin the process of linkage between projects for synergies and collaborative activities/outputs
3. to begin the process of linking individual projects into the broader Pan-African LOGIN research framework and to identify issues and opportunities
4. to review and finalize the amended draft National Assessment Framework

Session Facilitation:

1. Each team will be asked to make a presentation to the group of about 15-20 minutes focusing on an update of their Nairobi presentations, with a particular focus on the research methodology and the plan of action to achieve the targeted objectives, and more specifically on how their work to date fits into the LOGIN framework.
2. MG and AK will present the revised draft of the National Assessment Framework. The amended drafts will be circulated to the research teams by email in advance and will be available in hard copy as part of the Workshop kit, including comments received. The discussion will be directed towards finalizing these documents as background for on-going research.

Session III: LOG-IN Africa Visioning (Brainstorming and Working Groups)

Session Rationale:

This session will be concerned with having the network begin the process of creating a shared vision for the activities and longer term development of the Network. To this point the Network has been limited to the meeting in Nairobi, intensive activities by the Project Management Team and some email interaction. There is a need to move the very general consensus achieved in Nairobi and through the process of the development of the proposal into specific procedures and a broader shared vision.

Session objectives:

1. to identify specific operating procedures for the Network
2. to create a common vision for the nature of the Network as it develops
3. to develop a common perspective on where the Network would like to be in 3 years (after the initial funding has run out), and in 10 years assuming on-going support is available.
4. to begin the discussion on what will be necessary though the network to realize the longer term vision.

Session facilitation:

The group will be divided into two smaller groups. Group 1 will be assigned the task of envisioning where they would like LOGIN to be in 2-3 years time and then again in 10 years time. Group 2 will be assigned the task of brainstorming how to develop the LOGIN Network including the use of various tools, operating practices, meetings and so on. A rapporteur will be appointed from within each group. The group will have 30 minutes to brainstorm and to create a presentation. Each team will report back to a plenary (10 minutes for presentations). Following this and working from what the other team has done will each group will SWITCH ASSIGNMENTS and follow the same procedure again. Each team will make a final presentation to plenary and there will be 10-20 minutes for final discussion.

Session IV: Building a two-year Pan-African Plan of Action for LOG-IN Africa

Session Rationale:

Based on the outcomes of the previous session this session will move the more general perspectives concerning the Network to a more concrete level to achieve consensus concerning the two year Plan of Action for the project.

Session Objectives:

1. to achieve consensus on the implementation Plan of Action
2. to achieve consensus on the Research Agenda and Plan of Activities and to have a deeper discussion on outcome assessment indicators.

Session Facilitation

The group will be divided up into two. Group 1 will be provided with the draft implementation Plan of Action and asked to review and comment on this. Group 2 will be provided with the draft Research Agenda and Plan of Activities and a preliminary set of Outcome Indicators for discussion. A rapporteur will be appointed from within each group. The group will have 30 minutes to discuss and to create a presentation. Each team will report back to a plenary (10 minutes for presentations). Following this and working from what the other team has done will each group will SWITCH ASSIGNMENTS and follow the same procedure again. Each team will make a final presentation to plenary and there will be 10-20 minutes for final discussion.

Session V: LOG-IN Africa implementation Strategy and Partnership-Building

Session Rationale:

This session aims at defining the strategic plan for successful implementation of the LOG-IN Africa Research Network, at both national and Pan-African level, as well as exploring possible synergies and partnerships to reinforce the scope of LOG-IN Africa.

Session Objectives:

1. to define a common strategic plan for successful implementation of the LOG-IN Africa Research Network, at both national and Pan-African levels;
2. to explore possible synergies and partnerships to reinforce the scope of LOG-IN Africa., as well as defining clear and accepted criteria for partnership-building.

Session Facilitation:

After a recapitulation of the discussion and outcomes of the previous two days of the workshop, the reports of the working groups prepared the day before will be presented to introduce the discussion on how to move ahead, towards the successful implementation of the LOG-IN Africa Research Network, at both national and Pan-African levels.

After reporting about the preliminary networking activities conducted by the Project Management Team, the session will discuss in detail and will define a common strategy for implementation of the Research Network, and will identify and agree on the criteria for partnership-building. An overview of possible synergies and partnership for implementing LOG-IN Africa at both national and Pan-African level will also be discussed.

Session VI: LOG-IN Africa: partnership-building and supporting activities

This session will be “open” to the participation of selected invited observers.

A separate agenda will be provided according to the number of observers that will participate, and the needs expressed by the LOG-IN Africa partners.