Working Paper 255

Partnerships and Accountability:
Current thinking and approaches among agencies supporting Civil Society Organisations

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Contents

Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are increasingly involved in development policy, and recognise the need to use evidence and engage with policy processes more effectively. ODI's Civil Society Partnerships Programme (CSPP) is designed to help them to do this. While seeking to capitalise on ODI's 40 years of development research and policy work, particularly with Northern governments and agencies, the programme recognises the need to learn much more about how Southern organisations do it. To facilitate this the CSPP will need to develop long term equitable relationships with a wide range of Southern partner organisations. This working paper presents a summary of current thinking on issues of accountability, partnership and capacity-building between Northern and Southern organisations, and provides some examples of current practice among organisations involved in similar work.

Section 2 focuses partnership and accountability. Genuine partnerships are not an end in themselves – they are practiced and promoted in order to strengthen the capacity of the partners and ensure that the results of the partnership will be both relevant to target groups and sustainable in the long term. Capacity building is often a supply driven activity in which the so-called 'partners' do not share common goals, values or expectations. Traditionally, partnerships took place along the lines of a principal-agent relationship (donor-recipient), in which the principal holds authority and the latter is simply a receiver of support. In recent years, however, there has been a shift towards a more collaborative, mutually beneficial type of partnership. In this new partnership model both parties join their resources to achieve common benefits. An equitable partnership characterised by mutual accountability between partners needs to recognise that each party has different objectives, brings different capacity to the partnership, and will each learn something from it. This highlights the need for mutual respect of each partner organisation's mission and values as well as agreement on the terms of the relationship. The success of a partnership depends on the extent to which ownership, power and commitment are shared by the organisational partners. Ethics and principles play an important role in the partnership because they enhance the degree to which ownership, power and commitment are respected and shared.

Partnerships are neither rigid nor static, but fluid and dynamic relationships which develop with time. North-South partnerships in particular need to evolve, building capacity and structures that ensure partners are accountable to each other while addressing the needs of their respective stakeholder groups. In practice, there are two main barriers to effective partnerships: (i) inequality/power imbalances between partners; and (ii) the partners' internal management systems. These can be overcome by transferring responsibility and ownership to the less powerful partner and by investing in the necessary internal systems to provide effective support to the partnership.

Accountability refers to a chain of relationships in which actors are accountable upwards (to donors and other actors that have formal authority over the organisation), downwards (to target groups and beneficiaries but also to other groups and individuals that the organisation might affect directly and indirectly) and inwards (to organisational missions, vision and values). A three level accountability relationship is therefore required in partnerships: accountability of partners to their own stakeholders; accountability of partners to each other; and accountability of the partnership to its stakeholders.

In the context of this working paper however, the accountability of partners to each other requires special attention. The key areas that need to be clarified when organisations enter into a partnership are: (i) access to timely and accurate information; (ii) terms of engagement; (iii) the legitimacy of engagement/partnership; and (iv) procedural review and evaluation mechanisms. These are elaborated in greater detail in the paper itself.

Section 3 provides an overview of the organisational policies and strategies used by Northern organisations to promote equitable partnerships. While these are often rooted in common development cooperation policies and frequently share the same broad principles, there are wide variations in practice. All though tend to include the ethical, substantive and procedural elements, however there is often a wide gap between policy and practice. The following examples are discussed in greater length in the paper:

- The Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC) believes that establishing and maintaining relations on the basis of partnership is key to achieving development. The set of principles it has developed are broad, yet it offers guidelines as to how to initiate a partnership, how to maintain and strengthen it, and how to end it.

- The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs regards partnerships as an attitude, a working method and a means. By searching together for added value, partners enter into a joint commitment.

- The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GTZ) has four main criteria which must be met before they enter into a partnership: the project must be in line with the development-policy goals of the German Federal Government; all partners must have compatible interests; the private partner must make a key contribution to the project; and GTZ provides only those services to a project that the partner would not be able to render on its own.

- The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) envisages partnership as a relationship based on a shared vision and mutual respect that equitably addresses issues of ownership and control; that recognises fully the different contributions of each partner; that acknowledges reciprocal rights, obligations and accountability; and that is conducted in an open, transparent and collegial matter.

- The Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships in Developing Countries (KFPE) has developed guidelines based around 11 principles including joint objectives; mutual trust; sharing information; shared responsibility; and transparency.

- The main guiding principles of the Norwegian Council of Universities' Programme for Development Research and Education (NUFU) are equality in partnership, mutual benefit and the prevalence of Southern needs in identifying areas for cooperation.

- In addition to shared vision, objectives, activities and reciprocal obligations, Denmark's Development Policy 'Partnership 2000' emphasises strengthening the party that has the fewest resources.

- The US Agency for International Development's (USAID) comprehensive partnership principles and procedures emphasise the balance between respect for the principles of 'privateness' and independence with the maintenance of clear, results-oriented standards of accountability in the pursuit of mutually agreed objectives.

The annotated bibliography in Section 4 contains summaries of the most important publications and websites addressing the issues of accountability, partnerships and capacity building.

1   Introduction

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) play a vital role in poverty eradication by empowering the poor so their voices are heard when decisions that affect their lives are made. Working in between the household, the private sector and the state, CSOs include a very wide range of institutions, including non-governmental organisations (NGOs), faith-based institutions, professional associations, trade unions, research institutes and think tanks.

CSOs increasingly recognise the need to use evidence and engage with policy processes more effectively, but many Southern university research departments have collapsed, and the development research institutes and think tanks that have replaced them are often financially insecure, have poor capacity to provide policy advice and connections between them are weak.

ODI has been working with government, non-government and private sector organisations in the North and South for the past 40 years and has launched a new programme designed to promote improved contribution by CSOs to pro-poor national and international development policies. This Civil Society Partnership Programme (CSPP) will focus on four outcomes:[1]

- CSOs understand better how evidence can contribute to pro-poor policy processes;

- Regional capacity to support Southern CSOs is established;

- Useful information on current development policy issues, and how this knowledge can contribute to pro-poor policy, is easily accessible to CSOs;

- CSOs participate actively in Southern and Northern policy networks to promote pro-poor policies.

To achieve these outcomes, the programme is seeking to work with Southern organisations that share a commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); to the importance of evidence-based policy-making; and to the value of civil society participation in the policy process. ODI has a substantial body of development policy research, and practical knowledge and experience of knowledge management, policy advocacy, capacity-building and training, especially with Northern governments and agencies, but has a lot to learn about how Southern organisations influence development policy. The CSPP will provide resources for collaborative work, for the lessons to be disseminated widely, for Southern CSOs to develop their own independent capacity in this area, and to strengthen existing relationships between CSOs engaged in the policy process. For this programme to be successful ODI will need to develop long term equitable relationships with a wide range of Southern partner organisations.

Section 2 of this working paper provides a summary of current thinking on issues of accountability, partnership and capacity-building among Northern and Southern agencies involved in collaborative work with NGOs and other CSOs in developing countries. Section 3 provides some examples of current practice among a number of Northern agencies engaged in work similar to that proposed under the Partnership Programme Agreement (PPA). Section 4 contains an annotated bibliography of the key texts consulted for this review, along with summary information and website addresses for other organisations involved in similar work, and sources of information about these issues.

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[1] Full information about ODI's Civil Society Partnership Programme, and the Partnership Programme Agreement with DFID can be found on ODI's website at: www.odi.org.uk/cspp.

2 Current Thinking on Partnerships and Accountability

Genuine partnerships are not an end in themselves – they are practiced and promoted in order to strengthen the capacity of the partners and ensure that the results of the partnership will be both relevant to target groups and sustainable in the long term.

Capacity building is often a supply driven activity in which the so-called 'partners' do not share common goals, values or expectations. Traditionally, partnerships took place along the lines of a principal-agent relationship (donor-recipient), in which the principal holds authority and the latter is simply a receiver of support. In recent years, however, there has been a shift towards a more collaborative, mutually beneficial type of partnership. In this new partnership model both parties join their resources to achieve common benefits.

An equitable partnership, characterised by mutual accountability between partners, needs to recognise that each party has different objectives and brings different capacity to the partnership. This highlights the need for mutual respect of each partner organisation's mission and values, as well as agreement on the terms of the relationship. The success of a partnership depends on the extent to which ownership, power and commitment are shared by the organisational partners. Ethics and principles play an important role in the partnership because they enhance the degree to which ownership, power and commitment are respected and shared (Horton et al., 2003).

This working paper offers a brief summary of current thinking on issues of partnerships and accountability. Provided below are some guidelines that must be considered for a genuine partnership to take place and the paper concludes that partnership accountability, a process which involves addressing a complex set of asymmetries, enables partner organisations and their respective stakeholders to maximise capacity and move beyond meeting (contractual) proposed objectives.

2.1 Partnerships

Current definitions

Increasingly, terms such as 'donor' and 'recipient' are being replaced with terms such as 'development partners' to imply a more equitable relationship based on a shared agenda for change. Most definitions of partnership include terminology such as common aim, vision, goals, mission or interests; joint rights, resources and responsibilities; autonomous and independent; equality and trust.[2] Cadbury defines partnership as 'power being shared equally with all partners' (Cadbury, 1993: 11 in Cornwall et al., 2000), while Fowler refers to authentic partnerships as 'understood and mutually enabling, interdependent interactions with shared intentions' (Fowler, 1997: 117 in Cornwall et al., 2000).

Although the current definition has evolved from coordination and collaboration to mutual benefits and shared responsibility, there is no consensus on the meaning of partnership. Brinkerhoff (2004) suggests that the definition of partnership must include two critical elements:

- Mutuality: **interdependence** and **commitment** between partners, equality in decision making, rights and responsibilities;
- Organisational identity: the maintenance of each partner's own **mission, strategies** and **values**.

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[2] For more on this see Wildridge et al. (2004: 4).

Agreements that link partners in joint activities also engage their internal procedures, systems and cultures. Literature on development partnerships suggests that organisational partners must be seen as bringing their own complex systems, shaped by internal interests and stakeholder demands, to the partnership; 'it's like a marriage, you don't get just the individual, you get the whole family.'(Ashman, 2001: 10).

Partnerships in practice

An online search of government agencies and international donors reveals a diverse partnership rhetoric and, more often than not, points to its symbolic use for public relations purposes. An analysis of available evidence suggests that there is frequently a gap between the 'egalitarian relationship implied by the language and the principal-agent reality embodied in the donor's operational system.'(Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff, 2004: 264).

The starting point for any partnership between Northern and Southern organisations should be the recognition that development partners often have different backgrounds and experience, along with different needs and expectations. This also holds true within the partner organisations themselves: the project team, for example, has different expectations from the finance department, from the publicity office, etc. By virtue of their role in initiating the relationship and controlling the available resources, Northern partners hold a disproportionate amount of power in relation to Southern partners, who generally play an implementing role. This **power imbalance** undermines the mutuality needed for effective partnerships. Underlying the concept of partnership, therefore, is the need to rebalance power relationships between developing country organisations and external (mainly developed country) funding agencies.

Another of the main factors that limit the achievement of full partnership potential relates to the **administrative procedures and practices** of the donor partner which do not enable proper implementation of partnership principles (Ashman, 2001: 2). One argument is that partnership behaviour is influenced by pre-existing factors in the partnership environment: internal factors such as organisational policies, systems and culture, procedures for accountability, as well as external factors such as policies of key external stakeholders (government, etc.) and economic trends.

The desired equality between partners, however, should not be understood as sameness.[3] The distortion caused by the uneven capacity of partners, for example, can be minimised if the resourceful partner acknowledges and values the capacity and skills that the other partner brings to the relationship. This requires an indepth analysis of partners' strengths and weaknesses in order to identify their complementarity. A power balance can also be achieved by progressively transferring **responsibility** and **ownership** to the partner with less financial capacity,[4] by encouraging joint decision making and ensuring that there are ongoing and open communication channels between partners.

The rigidity of administrative procedures and practices of donor partners can only be addressed through commitment to the partnership and willingness to revise existing organisational procedures and practices. In this respect, though often unrecognised in formal donor policy and practice, most scholars and practitioners support the view that partnerships require start-up investments to establish internal support for partnership work (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff, 2004). Therefore, one of the main challenges in partnership practice lies in coordinating partners' policies while promoting greater flexibility, responsiveness and innovation.

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[3] As Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council (RAWOO) experts pointed out, there is also a need for the two partners to recognise their expertise; moreover, labelling the Northern partner as the expert in a partnership does not do justice to the local knowledge that the Southern partner brings to a project.

[4] Issue 6 of *Capacity.org*.

In the case of research partnerships which involve community groups, for example, once a relationship has been established, it is crucial that the community partners have representation and input into all aspects of the research project.[5] Community groups can inform the research team about the needs of the community, as well as what design is valuable and practical for the community. The literature on partnerships between donors and community-based organisations also emphasises the potential advantages of giving the latter greater responsibility in the relationship. If community-based organisations take greater role in project monitoring and subsequent project redesign, this could greatly assist in fostering project ownership and enhance the potential for sustainability. Making clear the accountability of the project to the intended beneficiaries in this manner could also encourage them to ensure financial accountability with respect to project funds.

Successful partnerships

Although most discussion on partnerships used to be concerned with performance management, there has been a shift from achieving proposed goals to offering a more flexible framework in which factors such as shared responsibility, mutual trust, partner and beneficiary satisfaction, prevail. At its most basic level, a partnership means that both parties have agreed to work together in implementing a programme, and that each party has a clear role and say in how that implementation happens. It is critical that each organisation's roles and responsibilities are understood from the beginning and subject to continuous discussed and revision. Responsibility must be shared for both successes and failures.

Critical factors associated with effective partnerships are the development of trust, cooperative interpersonal relationships, and processes which promote communication, mutual influence and joint learning (Ashman, 2001: 2).[6] A partnership should not be regarded as an end in itself, rather a means to achieve the respective goals of individual partners. The ultimate success of any partnership should be assessed based on whether it led to the realisation of partners' objectives which they would have not been able to achieve otherwise (Haque, 2004: 280).

2.2   Accountability

Accountability manages the power relations between actors which interact or affect each other directly or indirectly. It can be understood as 'giving an account' to another party who has a stake in what has been done. It evokes a sense of taking responsibility, but it also holds the meaning of being held responsible by others – being 'held to account' (Cornwall et al., 2000: 3). Accountability is not only the means through which individuals and organisations are held responsible for their decisions and actions, but also the means by which they take internal responsibility for shaping their organisational mission and values, for opening themselves to external scrutiny and for assessing performance in relation to goals. Accountability has beneficial effects not only for an organisation's stakeholders, but for the organisation itself. Amongst others, it promotes a culture and practice of compliance with organisational policies, it advances learning and innovation, and enables the organisation to maximise its potential in relation to internal and external actors.

Accountability refers to a chain of relationships in which actors are accountable upwards (to donors and other actors that have formal authority over the organisation), downwards (to target groups and beneficiaries but also to other groups and individuals that the organisation might affect directly and

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[5] For more on this, from a research/practice partnership perspective, see Reback et al. (2002).

[6] However, an in-depth study conducted by INTRAC revealed that Northern and Southern NGOs have different definitions of effective partnership. For the Northern NGOs, effective partnership relates to clarity about the purpose of the relationship and the quality of the work carried out; for the Southern NGOs, effectiveness relates to quality of the relationship itself rather than that of the work.

indirectly) and inwards (to organisational missions, vision and values). Through a participatory approach, the Global Accountability Project (GAP) developed an accountability framework which can be applied in partnership arrangements. It captures the current thinking on issues of accountability and proposes a model which contains four core dimensions that increase an organisation's accountability to its stakeholders (Blagescu, 2004). These must be integrated into an organisation's policies, procedures and practices, at all levels and stages of decision making and implementation, in relationships with both its internal and external stakeholders. The core dimensions are: (i) transparency; (ii) participation; (iii) evaluation; and (iv) complaints and redress.

The higher the quality and level of embeddedness of these dimensions in all organisational policies, processes and practices, the more accountable the organisation is. GAP acknowledges that these four dimensions are connected and impact on each other. Effective accountability requires that all parties in an accountable relationship fully understand and agree their obligations and rights, and believe that the other will act accordingly.

2.3 Accountability in North-South Partnerships

'Who is responsible to whom and for what?' is a critical question for any organisation to ask in relation to both internal and external affairs. In the context of partnerships, the issue of accountability is critical and significantly more complex.

Most of the literature on accountability and capacity building in North-South partnerships reviewed for this paper focused on (i) research partnerships or research/practice partnerships in the health sector between Northern governments or government agencies and Southern NGOs or think tanks; or (ii) partnerships between Northern and Southern NGOs.

As mentioned above, the need for accountability in North-South partnerships is mainly driven by the Northern partner's control over resources which skews the distribution of power (Brehm, 2001: 2). The Southern partner becomes dependent on the Northern partner (a vertical, dependency relationship) and is unable to maintain horizontal relations with other actors as equals.[7]

The partnership idea is closely interlinked to notions of capacity building, ownership and participation (Hauck and Land, 2000). Yet many Northern organisations have difficulty sharing decision making with partners, leaving partnerships generally imbalanced in favour of the North (Brehm, 2001). Ideally, North-South partnerships are driven by the **needs, priorities** and **potentials** of both partners and the project users/beneficiaries are involved in the project design.

If the partners are not accountable to each other (i.e. a genuine partnership in which the two partners share decision making and responsibility has not been ensured), it is likely that the Southern partner will be unable to remain accountable to its own local stakeholders. If the Northern partner assumes a control function, the Southern partner risks becoming donor driven and shifts all its accountability towards the North and away from its own stakeholders. Northern partners must recognise that they are not the only ones rendering accountability; Southern resources, such as local knowledge and capacity, relationships with local stakeholders, etc., are equally valuable resources for which both Southern and Northern partners need to be accountable.

A three level accountability relationship is therefore required in partnerships: accountability of partners to their own stakeholders; accountability of partners to each other; and accountability of the partnership to its stakeholders. The chain of accountability mentioned in the section above applies

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[7] Northern perceptions of priorities taking precedence when research is co-produced with the South has been identified by RAWOO as one of the main reasons for asymmetry in North-South research partnerships.

at all these three levels. The ability of partners to be accountable to their stakeholders will strengthen their role in the partnership and affect the way in which the partnership as a whole becomes accountable. In the context of this discussion, though, the accountability of partners to each other requires special attention. It is here where the power imbalance needs to be addressed. Based on work carried out by the GAP, Box 1 suggests the type of questions that the two partners need to tackle as they embark on working together.

Box 1: Key questions for equitable and accountable partnerships

Access to timely and accurate information
- How do partners share information?
- What type of information is provided? Where and when is it made available?
- Do all partners and relevant stakeholders have access to it?

Terms of engagement
- Are the terms on which the partnership is to be undertaken clearly understood by all parties?
- What are the objectives, strategies and expected outcomes of the partnership?
- Are the parameters of what is subject to negotiation (and what is not) clearly defined and understood?
- Do all partners have a say in decision making, particularly to ensure that needs are met and capacities used in the most fruitful way?
- How will the partnerships be formalised?
- How do partners share responsibility and profits?
- Are partners open to scrutiny and willing to revise the terms of engagement? Is there a mechanism in place for this?
- How can other potential partners initiate engagement?

Legitimacy of engagement/partnership
- How are partners selected?
- What process is used to ensure legitimacy and accountability of partners to their own stakeholders? (Is there a process to verify that partners represent the interests of those they claim to speak on behalf of?)
- What review process is in place to ensure competence of the partners?
- Is there a process in place to ensure commitment of the various partners?

Procedural review and evaluation mechanisms
- What mechanisms exist for partners who have a grievance regarding the engagement process?
- What mechanisms are in place to monitor and evaluate the partnership and its impact?
- What processes are in place to ensure correction/improvement?

Handing over more control to Southern partners should not imply that they are charged with the sole responsibility of project implementation. It is the decision making structures and control over resources which must shift (Cornwall et al., 2000: 8), as well as ensuring a shift of leadership, responsibilities, decision making power and resources from the Northern to the Southern partners (Smith in Maselli et al., 2004: 40). This entails a move from a relationship which runs along clear hierarchical lines to a more complex one. This in turn requires a clearer specification of roles and responsibilities between the various stakeholders and within the various organisations involved in the partnership.

Other points for consideration

- The extent to which organisations are able to contribute to the overall accountability of the partnership will depend not only on their own accountability mechanisms but also on the nature of the partnerships they enter and the dynamics between the various partners involved.

- It is important to consider the impact that the choice of partner might have on the relationships amongst various groups in society, particularly when aiming to reach vulnerable populations and the partner choice might reinforce structural injustices. There is a need to ensure that the partnership will not give the Southern partner an unfair competitive advantage over similar organisations which will be affected as a result of the partnership.

- Mutuality implies fairness and equity to maximise responsiveness to each partner's stakeholders and organisational needs (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff, 2004). There is a need to ensure that partnership accountability is not going to put a strain on accountability of partners to their respective stakeholders.

- Last and not least, issues such as health risks of the target group, the right to privacy, gender equity issues and environmental protection (likely to be incorporated in organisational policies and practice of partners) will affect the success and effectiveness of the partnership. Partners should discuss and agree on these in the early stages of the partnership, before an agreement is formalised.

2.4 Sources

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3 Examples of Current Practice

This paper provides an outline of recommended organisational policies and strategies used by some organisations to promote equitable partnerships.[8] Also included are policy recommendations made by commissions with an advisory role.

Most partnership-related guidelines are rooted in development cooperation policies of the respective governments and the meaning of partnership seems to be shared across the board, at least at the rhetorical level. What happens in practice is unpredictable and dependent on a high number of variables, from the capacity of partners to the political and economic environment in which partners operate.

Partnership guidelines and policies comprise three critical aspects: the ethical, the substantive and the procedural. Within the ethical aspect, trust, mutual respect, reciprocity of understanding, shared objectives, complementarity of skills and resources, and continuous communication are the desired principles to bind individual and organisational interaction. Some organisations have a set of ethical principles that guide their mission and relations with external actors in general (mainly funders); some of these are incorporated into ethical principles and policies that guide an organisation's work in partnerships. The ethical issues are critical because their neglect can stand in the way of the substantive and procedural dimensions.

The substantive dimension encompasses the actual content matter around which the partnership is being developed. This varies depending on the type of organisation and the type of activities in which it engages. In a partnership, substantive policies are usually agreed internally prior to negotiating them externally (with partners).

The procedural dimension highlights the need to define and agree on the operational procedures. Problems at this level can also stand in the way of an effective partnership. A set of procedures need to be agreed on within and between partner organisations to enable the implementation of ethical and substantive policies. These procedures should take into consideration aspects such as available and potential capacity, timeframes, etc.

While organisations have clear policies on the substantive and procedural aspects to guide their individual activities/projects and those activities take place in partnership, ethical policies and guidelines for partnerships are not so explicit.

3.1 Canadian Council for International Cooperation

The Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC) believes that establishing and maintaining relations on the basis of partnership is key to achieving development. The set of principles it has developed are broad, yet it offers guidelines on how to initiate a partnership, how to maintain and strengthen it, and how to end it.

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[8] A total of 17 government agencies, independent advisory commissions and other government-supported networks that operate at international level were initially contacted. All ethical policies and guidelines presented here were chosen due to their explicit character or direct focus on either private-public partnerships or North-South partnerships. Southern agencies seem to lack explicit ethical policies in partnerships. The discussions are based on email correspondence with staff from the various organisations as well as on publicly available information.

Partnerships should:

- advance and exemplify the full realisation of human rights and fundamental freedom, social justice, equitable distribution of global wealth and environmental sustainability;
- be built on shared visions and goals for society which imply mutual support and solidarity beyond the implementation of specific programmes and projects;
- be formed in a spirit of inclusiveness that respects and promotes the value of diversity;
- embody equity. Acknowledging that inequalities often exist as a result of power dynamics, especially in funding relations, partners should strive for equitable partnerships;
- be dynamic relationships built on respect and honesty, in which partners strive for better understanding and appreciation of one another.

Partners should be accountable to one another, respect each other's autonomy and constraints, and strive to foster a climate of mutual trust in all their partnership activities.

3.2   The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs regards partnerships as an attitude, a working method and a means. By searching together for added value, partners enter into a joint commitment.

A partnership is a voluntary cooperation agreement (though not without obligations) between governments and non-governmental actors such as enterprises, civil society organisations and knowledge and research institutes. They work towards a common goal or specific task, and therefore share the risks, responsibilities, resources, competencies and benefits. Roles and responsibilities in both developing countries and at home should be clearly defined beforehand. A partnership presupposes the ability of all the parties concerned to transcend their own boundaries, to see their own interests as part of a greater good, to establish or enhance cooperation with external actors and to form links.

The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a number of broad criteria[9] for public-private partnerships (PPP):

- they entail concerted action between government(s), private sector and – preferably – civil society and/or intergovernmental organisations. Partners must function on an equal basis, sharing common goals;
- private sector partners have to contribute 50 percent of private capital to the total budget, if and when investments have to be made. Without public cooperation the private sector would not be able or willing to implement the activities;
- each PPP has to include capacity building and transfer of knowledge to local partners;
- PPPs have to generate sustainable results (i.e. sustained benefits to the target group);
- they have to be in line with a developing country's national strategies for poverty reduction and sustainable development (such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers), and additional to existing Dutch development cooperation;
- they have to be supported by recipient countries and include involvement and participation of stakeholders/target groups at all levels.

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[9] Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directory General for International Cooperation, Public-Private Partnership Criteria, available online at http://www.minbuza.nl, accessed on 3 September 2004.

3.3   Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit GmbH

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GTZ) has guidelines for development partnerships with the private sector. There are four main criteria which must be met before they enter into a partnership:

- the proposed project must be in line with the development-policy goals of the German Federal Government;
- all partners must have compatible interests;
- the private partner must make a key contribution to the project;
- GTZ provides only those services to a project that the partner would not be able to render on its own.

The evaluation of the projects must be oriented to the basic principles of respect for human rights, participation of key stakeholders in decision making processes, the rule of law and guarantee of legal security. This list is supplemented by the following points, in order to ensure that the interests of all parties are represented in the planned project:

- **Compatibility with development-policy objectives**: the project must correspond to the priority focus for that country and must demonstrate clear development relevance, as well as be environmentally and socially compatible;
- **Complementarity**: the contributions must so complement each other that both partners achieve their objectives at a lower cost, more effectively and more quickly as a result of the partnership;
- **Subsidiarity**: the contribution will be made only when the private partner could not undertake the project without the public partner;
- **Fair competition**: the partnership should not lead to the case that a partner selected as the result of a non-transparent and incomprehensible process gains a competitive advantage over similar actors in its own industry. The partner selection process must be clearly understood and widely disseminated;
- **The contribution of the private sector**: The private partner must provide a key contribution (technical, human resources, etc.).

3.4   The International Development Research Centre, Canada

By partnership, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) envisages a relationship based on a shared vision and mutual respect that addresses equitably issues of ownership and control; that recognises fully the different contributions of each partner; that acknowledges reciprocal rights, obligations and accountability; and that is conducted in an open, transparent and collegial matter. IDRC's partnerships are built on the following principles:[10]

- **A shared vision**: effective collaboration requires a commonality of purpose and full intellectual partnership. Partners must share a vision of the value of the research, the intended objectives, the potential outcomes, and the soundness of the methodology;
- **Joint ownership**: the research protocol should be jointly elaborated, and the division of tasks should be clearly delineated and meet the needs of all partners;
- **Shared control**: Southern partners should be able to take responsibility for managing the project and funds, to innovate, experiment and learn;

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[10] IDRC, Partnerships for Progress, President's Message: A collaboration for mutual discovery and reciprocal reward, available at http://www.idrc.ca, accessed on 10 September 2004.

- **Reciprocal accountability**: a mechanism is needed to enable all partners to jointly monitor performance and be accountable;

- **Sustained commitment**: partners must provide sustained support for the duration of the work, confirming their reliability and commitment, thereby building strong relationships;

- **Flexibility and versatility**: the partnership must adapt to changing circumstances;

- **Effective communications**: partners must share information in an open and timely fashion. They must respect the communication culture, resources and perspectives of their partners;

- **Streamlined administration**: partners need to simplify, reduce, update and harmonise their administrative rules and regulations;

- **Coordination of efforts**: partners need to communicate with other interested parties – and form alliances with them – to reduce duplicate or conflicting demands on Southern research institutions and help mobilise additional support;

- **Effective follow-up**: after the end of the project, due attention must be paid to disseminating findings and promoting their use, as well as to building new partnerships to continue the work.

3.5 The Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries

The Swiss Strategy for the Promotion of Research in Developing Countries suggests that research partnerships should be set up as a possible way of reducing the imbalance in research between developing and industrialised countries.[11] The Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE) Guidelines comprise 11 principles for research in partnership between an industrialised country and developing countries, and offer practical guidelines as to how these principles can be achieved:[12]

1. Decide on the objectives together

- Who originally proposed the project?

- Is the research question precisely formulated? Do all the participants understand it?

- Are the working hypotheses clearly formulated, and have the methods for addressing them been decided upon?

- Did all the relevant actors and people who will be affected by the research participate in developing the theme of the research?

- Does the project take the interests of all the participants into consideration, especially those of the final user in the South?

- Does the research planned fit into the partners' existing national or regional research policies?

- Does it serve the interests of all the partners?

- Does the proposed research give due consideration to the social, cultural, political, economic, ecological and technical needs and situation of the partners?

- Who are likely to be the main beneficiaries of the knowledge resulting from the planned research activities?

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[11] Published by the Swiss Academy of Sciences (SAS), 1996.
[12] KFPE, Guidelines for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries: 11 Principles, Swiss Commission for Research Partnership with Developing Countries, 1998.

2. Build up mutual trust

- Do all the partners know each other well enough, and do they trust each other (positive or negative experiences)?
- Are descriptive outlines and references available for all suggested partners?
- Are there plans to make a systematic search for other partners?

3. Share information; develop networks

- Has provision been made on both organisational and technical levels for all the partners to have sufficient regular contact with each other? If yes, what has been done? What technical means of communication are available? If no, will it be possible to support the partners in improving or expanding their technical facilities? If so, how?
- Do all the partners have adequate opportunities (and the necessary technical equipment) to make contact with international organisations, data banks, etc.? Is everybody sufficiently familiar with the use of the technical equipment that is available?
- If not, is the project in a position to support the partners in carrying out necessary extensions and improvements to their technical infrastructure? How?

4. Share responsibility

- Will all the partners be included in the scientific supervision and the administrative responsibility?
- Will all the responsible partners have an opportunity to see all the documents relevant to them?
- Are the personal, organisational and financial conditions necessary for the taking over of responsibility fulfilled in the case of all partners? If not, what needs to be done?

5. Create transparency

- Are the mutually agreed financial and other contributions and the rights and duties of all partners recorded in writing?
- Will all partners be fully informed about where financial and other resources come from, how their use is planned, and what they have in fact been used for?
- Are there clear and fair rules about who has the authority to make what financial decisions?

6. Monitor and evaluate

- Is monitoring of the functioning of the partnership foreseen? If yes, how is it to be carried out?
- In internal evaluation, are all the partners actively involved in a balanced way? If not, why not?
- Have the criteria for internal evaluation been jointly defined, and are they known to all?
- Is an external evaluation advisable? If so, is the evaluating group appropriately constituted and is its task appropriately defined?
- Are the planned or promised financial resources adequate for monitoring and evaluation?

7. Disseminate the results

- Must access to or dissemination of the research results be limited? If so, whose access should be limited? Why?
- Are publications for a wider audience planned as well as scientific papers in international and national journals? If so, what?

- Are there concrete plans for passing on the new knowledge resulting from the project to the people who are directly affected? If so, what is planned?
- Are there plans to include appropriate people out of the target group in the process of spreading the information and putting it into practice? Is including them a practical possibility?

8. Apply the results

- Are there concrete plans, considering the local, national and regional conditions, to use the results of the research for the benefit of the target group(s)? If so, what kind? If not, why not?
- Will political decision makers, government bodies and NGOs be informed periodically about the progress of the research and will possible steps towards application be discussed with them?
- Will all the people concerned take part in the plans to put the results into practice, including the members of the target group(s)?

9. Share profits equitably

- Will all the partners be appropriately considered when the results of the research are published?
- Who will make the decisions about joint publications? Who will be shown drafts, etc., before publication?
- Have binding agreements been made about the rights of all partners in case the results prove to be of potential commercial value?
- Who should be allowed to use the economically valuable results, and under what conditions?

10. Increase research capacity

- Is it to be expected that the planned collaborative research activity will contribute to increasing the scientific capacity of all the partners?
- What importance has the research project for the development of that field in the country itself?
- Are there plans for the exchange of partners for further training?
- Which concrete support measures are foreseen with the aim of strengthening collaboration among developing countries?

11. Build on the achievements

- Will the results obtained be used, in an appropriate form, to increase the general awareness of the importance of research in developing countries?
- Are provisions being made and support given to ensure that partners from developing countries who have received training will be further employed in their professions when the joint project is over?
- Can it be expected that the research effort as a whole will contribute to reducing the emigration of scientists from developing countries?
- Are measures foreseen which will strengthen the partner institutions in the developing countries after the completion of the joint project?
- Have preparations been made to enable the research to be continued after the end of the joint project, if necessary – even if it has to be done by one of the partners alone?

KFPE advises that genuine partnerships require mutual respect, honesty and openness. The partners must be able to communicate effectively, and must be prepared to commit themselves to a long-term involvement. A basic requirement for the establishment of mutual trust is a continuing

dialogue and the exchange of experience amongst all those involved, including the members of the local community.

Common problems should be tackled together in order to motivate all the partners to cooperate actively. The best possible division of tasks and responsibilities, based on the different strengths of the partners, offers the best chance that synergic effects will be produced and made use of, and that all those involved will really benefit from the research activities.

3.6   Norwegian Council of Universities' Programme for Development Research and Education

The main guiding principles in the Norwegian Council of Universities' Programme for Development Research and Education (NUFU) approach are equality in partnership, mutual benefit and the prevalence of Southern needs in identifying areas for cooperation. The NUFU programme has the following guiding principles:[13]

- The needs and priorities of the institutions in developing countries are to form the basis for building up binding cooperative relationships between the parties.
- The development of competence is to take place primarily at institutions in the developing countries and shall be based on the principal of equality between the cooperating institutions.
- The programme is to be administered in accordance with ruling Norwegian policies governing aid to developing countries and is to be coordinated with Norwegian overseas development aid.
- When implementing the various programmes and projects, use is to be made of internationally recognised competence in the Norwegian research and universities system.
- The programme includes long-term cooperation agreements to expand the competence of institutions in developing countries.
- Support for infrastructure initiatives in developing country institutions may be provided in connection with the long-term cooperation agreements.

3.7   Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Denmark's Development Policy 'Partnership 2000' focuses on partnership as an indispensable basis for development.

In the Danish context, agreements concerning shared visions and objectives for the partnership and activities to be carried out and concerning the reciprocal obligations of the parties are based on a recognition of and respect for basic differences in values and resources. Denmark's partnerships are based on a shared vision that envisages the strengthening of the party that has fewest resources. In light of this, it recognises the need to build partnerships on the basis of a realistic assessment of what the individual partners are capable of doing. This requires an in-depth dialogue on development cooperation in order to arrive at a shared understanding of goals and means. Above all, there must be trust, openness and a will to bring about a gradual development of the cooperation.

Partnerships are based on respect for human rights and the environment, ensure gender balance and promote good governance.[14] Partnerships involve obligations and all partners must live up to the

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[13] Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Evaluation of the NUFU Programme, Evaluation Report 5/2000, p. 12-13.

[14] DANIDA, Partnership – the basis for development cooperation, available online at http://www.um.dk, accessed on 15 September 2004.

commitments that they agree on after thorough analysis and discussion. Equally important, the partners need to focus on quality performance, evaluation and compliance.

- Documentation of the long-term impact is necessary not only with a view to the continued development of assistance and of concrete activities; better documentation of the results achieved will also make a significant contribution to maintaining the broad support among the general public.

- Quality assurance will be strengthened through further development of the performance indicator system and of an impact measurement system. It is crucial that this development should take place in cooperation with partners in the programme countries and with other donors, and that support should be provided for partners to gather data and process statistics.

- In developing the evaluation system there should be a focus on combining the need to communicate information to Danish development administrators with the need for information in partner countries. Capacity building in the field of evaluation in partner countries should be supported in the interests of performing evaluations in partnership.

- Compliance with agreed strategies, methods and procedures should be improved through increased advisory support for staff, better possibilities of communication among units and better use of these possibilities, and by ongoing quality control of development activities.

- Further decentralisation by devolving authority from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the bilateral and multilateral representatives should be considered as a means for better deployment of resources and, not least, to ensure that Denmark can participate as a credible and flexible partner in the coordination of development assistance.

Specific guidelines for support to research and to research capacity building through ENRECA (Enhancing Research Capacity) are available together with a draft agreement to be used for formalising partnerships. Guidelines for partnerships in research capacity building are formulated in rather general terms, but more specific ones are currently being formulated in order to guide partners on partnership principles and their practical consequence. The accountability in partnership is monitored as part of the general monitoring process, by reviewing the distribution of the total budget between partners before approving projects, ensuring that both partners have been involved in the formulation of the project, regular reporting, etc.

3.8   US Agency for International Development

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) has developed extensive policy principles and operational guidelines to lead its relationship with private non-voluntary organisations (PVOs). To USAID, partnerships are constructive and mutually beneficial interactive processes. At the core of the policy lies the balance between respect for the principles of 'privateness' and independence with the maintenance of clear, results-oriented standards of accountability in the pursuit of mutually agreed objectives.[15]

- **Consultation**: USAID and partners will work together more effectively if they have better communication at all levels and from matters of policy and programme strategy to activity design. USAID policy is to foster the partnership by engaging in consultation with PVOs on a broad range of issues, beginning at the earliest stages of the strategic planning process.

- **Participation**: Broad-based, equitable participation is vital to sustainability and to the success of development efforts. Participatory processes promote a sense of ownership and increase the probability that the development effort will be sustained.

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[15] USAID (2002) *USAID – US PVO Partnership, Policy Guidance*, USAID: Washington DC.

- **Independence**: A PVO's relationship with USAID must not result in a loss of the PVO's private and independent character since, without independence, the fundamental values associated with PVOs and USAID's working with them are diminished. While an organisation's ability to maintain its independence depends on a variety of factors, undue dependence on a single source of funding can jeopardise the role of PVOs.

- **Capacity Building**: USAID policy is that support for institutional capacity building is an essential component of a focused, results-oriented strategy, and is integral to the concept of sustainable development.

- **Cost sharing**: When used, its application should be flexible, case-specific, and should be used to support or contribute to the achievement of results. Cost share should be based on whether it is appropriate for the recipient organisation in the particular circumstances.

- **Simplification**: Simplification of administrative and grant-making requirements is essential to achieving an effective, results-oriented partnership. USAID must, as a matter of policy, identify and implement measures to simplify and rationalise administrative, procedural, and contractual requirements across the spectrum, from registration to negotiation to implementation to audit, consistent with appropriate standards of accountability.

Operational guidelines for these principles are also available, mainly focusing on the consultation processes, cost sharing and decision making structures.

3.9   Sources

DANIDA, Partnership – the basis for development cooperation, available online at http://www.um.dk.

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directory General for International Cooperation, Public-Private Partnership Criteria, available online at http://www.minbuza.nl.

IDRC, Partnerships for Progress, President's Message: Collaboration for mutual discovery and reciprocal reward, available at http://www.idrc.ca.

KFPE, Guidelines for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries: 11 Principles, Swiss Commission for Research Partnership with Developing Countries, 1998.

Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Evaluation of the NUFU Programme, Evaluation Report 5/2000.

SAS, Swiss Strategy for the Promotion of Research in Developing Countries, Swiss Academy of Sciences (SAS), 1996.

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Anne Birgitte Hansen, Department for Development Policy, Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 29 September 2004.

Ingrid Hagen, International Institute for Communication and Development, The Netherlands, 28 September 2004.

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4 Further Information

This section contains an annotated bibliography of the key documents consulted for this study, and an overview of the information available about partnerships and accountability on the websites of some of the key organisations active in this area.

4.1 Annotated Bibliography

This annotated bibliography contains summaries of the most important publications addressing the issues of accountability, partnerships and capacity building. It is important to mention from the outset that the term mutual accountability in partnerships is relatively new. While keeping the focus on accountability in the context of Northern and Southern agencies involved in collaborative work with NGOs and other CSOs from developing countries, documents that tackle accountability in broader partnership scenarios – such as those between government and businesses – are also included here since they offer a good platform for cross-sectoral learning.

Sources are listed in alphabetical order.

Ashman, D. (2001) 'Strengthening North-South Partnerships for Sustainable Development,' *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* **30(1) Institute for Development Research.**

Although American private voluntary organisations (PVOs) have been working for more than a decade on improving their partnerships with Southern NGOs, current surveys indicate that there is still a gap between PVO and Southern NGO perceptions of effectiveness. On the basis of a comparative analysis of four case studies of partnership between United States PVOs and African NGOs, this article suggests that the remaining barriers to effective partnership are found in the PVOs' internal systems for financial and management control. These systems are more attuned to the demands of accountability, as conceptualised in agency theories, than to the demands of partnership as conceptualised in collaboration theories. This article proposes an integrative concept, collaborative accountability, and recommends a number of proactive and practical change strategies for PVOs wishing to continue to improve their partnerships.

Bautista, M., L. Velho and D. Kaplan (2001) 'Comparative Study of the Impacts of Donor-Initiated Programmes on Research Capacity in the South,' International Report to the DGIS, The Netherlands: Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

This report attempts to substantiate the concept of demand-driven research, to popularise a participatory approach to research, and to institutionalise the process of learning from populations. It rejects the concept of knowledge for its own sake and focuses much more on the end user of knowledge, particularly policy makers. In conclusion, it states that despite the fact that the Southern partners in the cooperation programmes enjoy academic and administrative autonomy, the foreign agencies usually end up taking most of the decisions that are crucial to the cooperation.

Blagescu, M. (2004) 'Global Accountability Project – Overview of the Revised Framework', *GAP Paper* **101, London: One World Trust.**

This paper outlines the One World Trust's Global Accountability Project (GAP) and the model that underlies it. It introduces the accountability framework which is being used to assess the

accountability of intergovernmental organisations, transnational corporations and international NGOs and it briefly describes each of the four dimensions – transparency, participation, evaluation, and complaints and redress – making up this framework.

Bobenrieth, M. (2004) 'Partnerships: Strong Language – vernacular or meaning?' Final Project submission for the ODI/IBLF Partnership Brokers Accreditation Scheme.

Applying the term partnership in describing alliances among several sectors to address social and environmental challenges should be approached with caution. There is a danger that the vernacular of the private sector will make actors there take the word literally and reach conclusions about the structure that may or may not be accurate. This paper offers a good comparison of the success factors outlined by the strategic alliances and cross-sector partnerships models.

Bossuyt, J. and G. Laporte (1994) 'Partnership in the 1990's: How to Make It Work Better', *Policy Management Brief* **3, Maastricht: European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM).**

This brief provides the summary of a round table discussion initiated by ECDPM and attended by participants from developing countries, donor agencies, parliaments, NGOs and the research community. It reviews the pressures on partnership and contradictions in the aid system. It argues that there is no alternative to partnership, but that the concept needs redefining. Suggestions are made on how this can be done in the management of development programmes. Finally, it analyses strategies to accelerate the desired reforms.

It states that the accountability regime under current partnership approaches is flawed. Instead of moving 'downwards' towards beneficiaries, it moves 'upwards' towards donor constituencies. Performance is measured according to levels of disbursement, delivery of inputs, and satisfaction of deadlines. These 'efficiency' criteria are weighted towards control-oriented relationships in which the benefits from a partnership – such as ownership, discussion and debate, flexibility and sustained local impact – are hardly measured.

There can be no partnership without strict financial accountability. But more is at stake than simply balancing the books. The aid sector urgently needs to move away from a commitment and disbursement culture. Sustainable development impact, rather than inputs and spending targets, has to become the main yardstick for performance and reward. The content and modalities of this new accountability culture could best be devised in a partnership mode. This involves joint identification of performance criteria, ways of measuring progress and benchmarks upon which to base the release of funds. Possible indicators include the quality of dialogue, levels of participation, development of local capacities, implementation progress and the sustainability of benefits.

Brehm, V. with E. Harris-Curtis, L. Padrao and M. Tanner (2004) *Autonomy or Dependence? Case Studies of North-South NGO Partnerships***, London: INTRAC.**

This book explores the concept and practice of 'partnership' between NGOs in the North and South. Based on a rigorous four-year study, the book draws together the perspectives of a group of European NGOs and compares these with the experiences of a selection of their partners in Brazil, Cambodia and Tanzania. The authors conclude with a look ahead to how partnerships are changing as networks and alliances of Northern and Southern CSOs join together to work on common issues.

Brehm, V. (2001) 'Promoting Effective North-South Partnerships: A Comparative Study of Ten European NGOs', *INTRAC Occasional Paper* **35, Oxford: INTRAC.**

This new research from the International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC) investigates the complex and varied nature of NGO partnerships and assesses the challenges to building meaningful relationships. In surveying the policies and practices of 10 NGOs across Europe, the study draws a distinction between those that develop systems to create in-depth partnerships and those that restrict themselves to a narrower funding relationship.

It notes that North-South NGO partnerships can undoubtedly bring mutual benefits. The Northern NGO is well placed for approaching the donor public and for advocacy work. The Southern NGO has local knowledge and presence. A strong partnership can link the two constituencies, strengthening the legitimacy of both partners. Partnerships can also go beyond the temporary individual development project. The paper ends with recommendations for Northern NGOs in order to achieve legitimacy and success for both partners.

Brinkerhoff, J. M. (2004) *Partnership for International Development: Rhetoric or Results?* **Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.**

Partnership is arguably one of the most popular solutions in the search for institutional models that can deliver more and better development outcomes. Yet the evidence on partnerships' contributions to actual performance have been anecdotal for the most part. This volume bridges the gap between rhetoric and practice, clarifying what the concept means and providing a roadmap for how to achieve meaningful partnerships. The discussion is enhanced by case studies of partnerships for public service, corporate social responsibility and conflict resolution.

Brinkerhoff, D. W. and J. M. Brinkerhoff (2004) 'Partnerships between international donors and non-governmental development organisations: opportunities and constraints', *International Review of Administrative Sciences* **70(2).**

This article examines the partnerships between international donors and non-governmental development organisations. It identifies the opportunities and constraints of partnerships by discussing four case studies. Challenges of such relationships are: constraints related to donor-initiated partnerships; addressing the legacy of past relationships; the insufficiency of relying on personal relationships; and the limits of good intentions. The article stresses the importance of acknowledging the political and economic realities that frame partnerships between donors and non-governmental development organisations.

Caloghirou, Y., G. Hondroyiannis and N. Vonortas (2003) 'The Performance of Research Partnerships', *Managerial and Decision Economics* **24(2, 3).**

This paper investigates the performance of non-equity research partnerships from the point of view of the individual business partners. Partnership success is shown to depend significantly on the closeness of the cooperative research to the in-house research and development effort, on the firm's effort to learn from the partnership and its partners, and also on the absence of problems of knowledge appropriation between partners.

CIDA (2000) 'CPB Guide to Performance Reporting For Canadian and Developing-Country Partners', Prepared by the Canadian Partnership Branch, Quebec: Canadian International Development Agency.

This guide, adapted from the Agency's Guide to Project Performance Reporting prepared by the Performance Review Branch, provides Canadian Partnership Branch's (CPB) Voluntary Sector partners with guidelines for performance reporting at both the programme and the project levels. The guide is one of the management tools developed by the Branch and the Agency to support CPB and its partners in applying results-based management (RBM) concepts and principles to the programme/project life-cycle. The principles of partnership, accountability and transparency are emphasised. It recommends that good performance reporting should be viewed primarily as an opportunity to analyse and collectively reflect on past accomplishments, or failures, with a view to learning from them and improving management decision making.

What are the reasonable limits of accountability that Canadian partners should assume for the achievement and reporting of developmental results? CPB's Canadian partners commit themselves to development, contribute resources through CPB's cost-sharing system and take actions and decisions aimed at producing developmental results. They therefore share accountability for the achievement of programme and project outputs and outcomes with CPB and with developing-country partners. This joint accountability makes it especially important for CPB to be able to make decisions that will affect its programmes based on reliable performance reports provided by its partners.

CIDA and its Canadian partners hold shared accountability for development results within the context of the interdependent partnerships with recipient governments, and international and local partners. CIDA's shared accountabilities for development results begin when it makes the decision to engage in a partnership for development. Partnership starts with shared commitments and continues with shared control.

CIDA (2002) 'Review of Current RBM and Accountability Practices in CIDA', Quebec: Canadian International Development Agency.

The purpose of this review was to examine results-based management and accountability practices in CIDA, with specific attention to the operational issues surrounding their current and potential application to Capacity Development Initiatives (CDIs) and Program Based Approaches (PBAs). The review was guided by a matrix which consisted of nine topic areas based in part on the Treasury Board Secretariat's Guide for the Development of Results-based Management and Accountability Frameworks (August 2001). This review was co-directed by Performance Review Branch and Policy Branch, while the data collection, analysis and reporting was carried out by a team of five contracted individuals.

The concept of 'shared accountability' has been proposed as a more sophisticated 'third way' to emerge in performance management. For example, performance accountabilities might be defined at a 'higher level' (e.g. for forming partnerships and for managing for results, instead of achieving specific, pre-set results) than what is currently found in some donor performance management systems. However, this would probably require a systemic shift in how the institution or agency views performance, accountability, and results management.

The concepts of partnership and local ownership were defined as fundamental to the nature of CIDA's accountability for development results. CIDA and its Canadian partners were said to hold shared accountability for development results within the context of the interdependent partnerships

with recipient governments, and international and local partners. CIDA's shared accountabilities for development results begin when it makes the decision to engage in a partnership for development. Partnership starts with shared commitments, continues with shared control and management, and leads eventually to shared accountability for development results.

Performance management implies rigor in the definition and achievement of developmental results, as well as stronger accountability relationships between donors and government, within donor agencies, between donors and beneficiaries/partners, and perhaps most fundamentally, between beneficiary organisations and their own constituencies.

Collins, T. and L. Higgins (2000) 'Sector Wide Approaches with a focus on Partnership', Report on the seminar with the same name held in Dublin Castle, 8–10 February 2000, Ireland Aid.

This conference report provides an overview of the deliberations of the papers and the group discussions on the themes of ownership, conditionality, government capacity, partnership and participation, and reflects on them from a theoretical perspective. Section one of the report presents a thematic summary of the presentations and discussions at the seminar; section two explores some of the core themes from a theoretical and applied perspective drawing on the Irish experience as the beneficiary of significant European Union transfers; section three contains papers on effective participation in sector programmes, the role of partnership in implementing education sector wide approach in Uganda, and SIDA's policy for sector programme support.

Considine, M. (2002) 'The end of the line? Accountable governance in the age of networks, partnerships and joined-up services', *Governance* **15(1) January.**

Accountability remains a key tenet of the good governance agenda. It is usually defined as a government's obligation to respect the interests of those affected by its decisions, programmes and interventions through mechanisms of answerability and enforceability. It can be vertical (downwards accountability to citizens, clients etc.) or horizontal (sideways checks and balances within government). In practice these distinctions increasingly break down, and lines of accountability have become more blurred. This has important implications for traditional notions of responsiveness, obligation and communication.

In assessing the shifting patterns of accountability, the author draws on over a thousand interviews with officials in employment service institutions in the UK, Australia, New Zealand and the Netherlands. The implications of the findings are clearly more widespread, however. Each of these countries is engaged in significant structural reform, which allows the author to assess the impact on accountability of variables such as the extent of privatisation or contracting out, and the extent of competition between public and private agencies. These four countries are also considered to be pioneers in the field of public sector reform, providing a means of comparing the ways in which a common commitment to governance reforms may result in different accountability strategies.

Cornwall, A., H. Lucas and K. Pasteur (2000) 'Accountability through Participation. Developing Workable Partnership Models in the Health Sector', *IDS Bulletin* **31/1, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.**

Communities are no longer seen as passive recipients of healthcare. But what does this shift in emphasis mean? What kind of relationship between communities, service providers and managers is

best? A workshop held at the Institute of Development Studies in 1999 asked three questions: What does accountability mean? How can health service providers be accountable to their users? What sorts of partnership will improve accountability and effectiveness? Studies from 11 countries illustrated experiences with participatory approaches and partnerships in enhancing accountability in the health sector.

Workshop participants identified a range of interpretations of accountability: giving an account of what has been done, maintaining financial accounts, taking responsibility and being held responsible by others. A variety of partnerships were also discussed involving international, national and local non-government organisations, governments, and donors. Recognition of the fundamental inseparability between accountability, transparency and trust, and the need to address power relations were crucial elements of workshop discussions.

Costello, A. and A. Zumla (2000) 'Moving to research partnerships in developing countries', _British Medical Journal_ 321(7264).

This paper contends that the research model supported by many funding agencies remains semicolonial in nature. Foreign domination in setting the research agenda and deciding on the guidelines for project management have negative consequences. Funding agencies should review their investment decision by using broader evaluation criteria that go beyond scientific quality. Partnership models should become the norm.

A truly cooperative research partnership rests on four broad principles:

- mutual trust and shared decision making;
- national ownership;
- emphasis on getting research findings into policy and practice;
- development of national research capacity.

Fukuda-Parr, S., C. Lopes and K. Malik (eds.) (2002) _Capacity for Development: New Solutions to Old Problems_, London and New York: Earthscan Publications/UNDP.

This volume looks at what has gone right with technical cooperation in recent years, what has gone wrong, and how to do it better and perhaps very differently. It focuses on the questions of indigenous capacity, ownership, civic engagement and new possibilities for knowledge-sharing, for which the revolution in information and communications technologies offers ample opportunities.

It argues that if technical cooperation is to work for capacity development, only institutional innovations, new models most appropriate to today's social and economic environment, will overcome the well-known constraints. This means:

- starting with the motto 'scan globally, reinvent locally';
- trying out new methods, such as networks that make the best use of new types of learning;
- trying out innovations that address asymmetry in donor-recipient relationships, such as pooling technical cooperation funds and developing forums for discussion among Southern nations.

Gyapong, J. (2001) *Development of innovative North-South partnerships: overcoming difficulties*, **Geneva: Council on Health Research for Development (COHRED).**

The learning brief focuses on the processes which took place to develop the Ghanaian–Dutch Research Cooperation Programme and on the lessons learned from this process. The programme argues that demand-driven health research can be effective and responsible if all stakeholders in the process can agree on a comprehensive programme for health and development at national level. Such a programme would stimulate a research agenda based on community needs, which in turn would inform the research for development agenda.

Hakkarainen, O. et al. (2002) 'Voices from the Southern Civil Societies: Interplay of National and Global Contexts in the Performance of Civil Society Organisations in the South', Report prepared for the Department for International Development Cooperation (DIDC), Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

This study argues that the relationship of Northern aid agencies and NGOs with the South is far from the 'partnership' they like to project. The study seeks to give a Southern perspective on development aid and relations with the North, and was conducted in seven countries with which Finland has development links – Kenya, Namibia, Nepal, Thailand, Vietnam, Mexico and Nicaragua.

The study draws a number of conclusions including that the donors easily set the agenda for their Southern partners, leading to a situation where Southern CSOs are 'dressing up' their own priorities to fit the donor policies. The Southern CSOs hesitate to criticise the donors and bring up their own views. Southern CSOs rarely receive thorough information about the backgrounds and policies of their partner organisations in the North. Open-minded and equal communication with the CSOs, together with a proper understanding of the entire society and role of organised civil society therein is a crucial requirement for constructive and long-term cooperation. The donors should also be aware of, and also share, the policy aims of the CSO, to have a vision about the optimal role of the organised civil society and especially about their relationship with the state. The state apparatus as well as CSOs benefit from having a clear relationship with each other.

To tackle these problems, the study recommends donors establish a genuine communication process with CSOs by adopting a participatory approach, being more open about their own problems and allowing CSOs to have a say in the partnerships processes.

Haque, M. S. (2004) 'Governance based on partnership with NGOs: implication for development and empowerment in rural Bangladesh', *International Review of Administrative Sciences* **70(2).**

This article introduces the current debate on governance based on partnership between the state and NGOs. It explains the forms and dimensions of such partnership in the case of Bangladesh and evaluates the partnership experience in terms of whether or not it achieved the stipulated objectives of development and empowerment. It also explores major factors and interests behind the partnership and offers some suggestions to rethink partnership and overcome the drawbacks in Bangladesh.

Hauck, V. and T. Land (2000) 'Beyond the Partnership Rhetoric: Reviewing Experiences and Policy Considerations for Implementing 'Genuine' Partnerships in North-South

Cooperation', *ECDPM Discussion Paper* **20, Maastricht: European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM).**

This paper tries to understand what it takes to make 'genuine' partnership work at an organisational level in North-South cooperation. It adds to the debate on terminology, concept and practice of partnership, the relationship between partnership and capacity-building, and the implications for development organisations of adopting the partnership approach

Following a review of some of the issues currently on the table in connection with the policy and practice of North-South development partnerships, the paper reflects on the Centre's own attempts at developing 'genuine' partnerships with organisations in the South, and presents some preliminary lessons from experience. To conclude, the paper discusses the extent to which partnership contributes to meeting capacity-building objectives. Finally it challenges organisations to reflect on their own abilities to address capacity-building through partnership and reflects more widely on the implications this holds for the aid industry in general.

Genuine partnership provides a framework for building greater equality, for identifying shared development objectives and for accommodating both Northern accountability requirements and Southern ownership. One concern, expressed primarily by Southern partners, is that there is an absence of 'mutuality' in their relationship with Northern partners. This plays out in terms of the influence that can be exercised over policy issues and management decisions, and in relation to determining the lines of accountability. This is said to undermine the level of satisfaction with the relationship and can lead to 'pseudo-partnerships'.

Horton, D. et al. (2003) *Evaluating Capacity Development, Experiences from Research and Capacity Development Organisations around the World***, ISNAR/IDRC/CTA, EarthPrint (also available online via www.idrc.ca).**

This book explains how the Evaluating Capacity Development Project used an action-learning approach, bringing together people from various countries and different types of organisations to conduct six evaluation studies over the course of three years. The authors use examples and lessons drawn from the evaluation studies as a basis for making general conclusions on how capacity development efforts and evaluation can help organisations achieve their missions. Chapter 5 offers a summary of learning about partnerships between national and international organisations involved in organisational capacity building.

Kaplan, K. (2003) 'Plotting Partnerships: Ensuring Accountability and Fostering Innovation', *BPD Practitioner Note Series***, London: BPD Water and Sanitation.**

This paper explores the way practitioners approach multi-stakeholder partnerships in order to deliver services, based specifically on design features in water and sanitation projects. By plotting partnerships on two axes that balance 'innovation and accountability' against 'policy and task orientation', this report highlights where opportunities for both delivery and influence are being missed.

The paper concludes that the ideal partnership would be framed as a combination of innovation and creativity whilst ensuring accountability, and focusing on delivery whilst capturing lessons to influence the rules.

Kovach, H., C. Neligan and S. Burall (2003) 'Power without accountability?' *Global Accountability Project Report* **1, London: One World Trust.**

This report introduces a framework of accountability for use in comparing the accountability of intergovernmental organisations (IGOs), transnational corporations (TNCs) and international NGOs. The report assesses 18 of the world's most powerful organisations. Scores are provided in their performance in two aspects of accountability: member control of governance structures and access to information.

KFPE (1998) *Guidelines for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries: 11 Principles*, **Berne: Swiss Commission for Research Partnership with Developing Countries.**

These guidelines comprise 11 principles for research in partnership between an industrialised country and developing countries:

- Decide on the objectives together
- Build up mutual trust
- Share information; develop networks
- Share responsibility
- Create transparency
- Monitor and evaluate the collaboration
- Disseminate the results
- Apply the results
- Share profits equitably
- Increase research capacity
- Build on the achievements

For each principle there is a description of the overall aim, practical suggestions as to how it can be achieved, and a checklist of questions for evaluating how far a specific proposal fulfils the aim.

According to the report, genuine partnerships require mutual respect, honesty and openness. The partners must be able to communicate effectively, and must be prepared to commit themselves to a long-term involvement. A basic requirement for the establishment of mutual trust is a continuing dialogue and the exchange of experience among all those involved, including the members of the local community.

Common problems should be tackled together in order to motivate all the partners to cooperate actively. The best possible division of tasks and responsibilities, based on the different strengths of the partners, offers the best chance that synergic effects will be produced and made use of, and that all those involved will really benefit from the research activities.

Labonte, R. (1999) 'Mutual accountability in partnerships: Health agencies and community groups', *Promotion and Education* **6(1), Academic Research Library.**

This paper deals primarily with accountability strains between health systems and community groups. Many of these are the same in intersectoral partnerships since not all partners are equal in resources or other forms of power. Based on lessons learnt from other partnerships and an original study of a policy partnership in Canada, the paper concludes with some points about what makes an

effective partnership. Among these are: being clear on the purpose for partnership development; partners should have a constituency they represent and have an important stake in the issue; ensuring partnership ownership (through the existence of mechanisms for representative's communication with, and accountability to, organisational members, etc.); and building trust.

Lloyd M., M. Preston-Shoot, B. Temple and R. Wuu (1996) 'Whose Project is it Anyway? Sharing and shaping the research and development agenda', *Disability and Society* **11(3), September.**

The NHS and Community Care Act 1990 (NHSCCA) requires that local authorities should consult with service users in their review and planning of services. This requirement is open to various levels of interpretation. The exercise becomes more complex when planning and review are based on a funded research project, in which the voice of users can easily be lost or their participation only nominal. This article examines some of the key issues and dilemmas in partnership research, through critical evaluation of a research project in which the authors were involved. Paradoxically, it is issues of power, control, expertise, authority and accountability which emerge as recurrent themes in examination of the practice of partnership.

Maselli D., J-A. Lys and J. Schmid (2004) *Improving Impacts of Research Partnerships***, Berne: Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships (KFPE).**

North-South research partnerships are considered a powerful tool for contributing both to knowledge generation and capacity building in the South as well as in the North. However, it appears that little is known about the impact of research partnerships, which stimulated the KFPE to launch this study. The aims of the study are to: (i) provide insights into how to achieve desired impacts and avoid drawbacks; (ii) stimulate discussion of impacts; and (iii) achieve better understanding of the functioning of research partnerships. Ultimately, the study aims to help improve the design and implementation of funding schemes that support research partnerships.

This publication is based on analysis of a number of case studies encompassing a wide variety of partnerships, discussions held during the various workshops of the Impact Assessment Working Group, and the conclusions derived. Thus, while it does not pretend to be comprehensive, it aims to stress the importance of impact planning, monitoring and assessment as elements in the design and evaluation of research projects or programmes. In addition, it is intended to help in moving from 'proving' to 'improving' impacts, thus stressing the need for ongoing mutual accountability between partners, as opposed to accountability for results.

Nair, K. N. and V. Menon (2002) 'Capacity Building for Demand-Led Research: Issues and Priorities' *ECDPM Discussion Paper* **45, Maastricht: European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM).**

In the context of the failure of past development experiences and the knowledge asymmetry between North and South, this paper examines the various dimensions of the concept of demand-led research. In view of the knowledge gap and the poor material conditions in many countries in the South, considerable support from the North is required for them to build up the necessary capacity. Even with such support, these nations face an uphill task in realising 'capabilities', a higher stage of subjective intrinsic abilities built up on the vital foundation of objective conditions laid down in the process of capacity building. Under conditions of freedom and civil liberties, individuals with such capabilities could actively participate in democratic processes in order to come to their own

decisions on 'patent injustices' and how to rectify them. Demand-led research can generate the empowering knowledge that will enable individuals to reach the level of capability to make informed choices of their own, without intellectual inputs from the North. The paper suggests some actions that various agencies in the North and the South could take to promote demand-led research in the South.

Neligan, C. (2003) *Increasing Accountability through External Stakeholder Engagement*, **London: One World Trust.**

This paper provides a framework within which to place the concept of external stakeholder engagement. It defines each of these terms and argues that engagement must be undertaken in a manner which links external stakeholders to the political processes of decision making.

Neligan, C., M. Blagescu and H. Kovach (2003) *An Overview of International Organisations and Their External Stakeholder Engagement,* **London: One World Trust.**

This paper provides a general overview of the main issues surrounding the degree of engagement between international NGOs, transnational corporations and intergovernmental organisations with their respective external stakeholders. The paper tackles questions such as: Who is engaged? Why does stakeholder engagement take place within each sector? What mechanisms of engagement are used?

Nelson, J. and S. Zadek (2000) *'Partnership Alchemy: New Social Partnerships in Europe',* **Denmark: The Copenhagen Centre.**

This report provides an overview of an important trend emerging throughout Europe. It takes a close look at partnerships between government, business, trade unions and other civil society organisations which are coming together to meet the challenges of society and economic competitiveness. Whilst a lot of discussion has already taken place about such partnerships there has been little focused research on the subject. This publication is an attempt to fill the gap by bringing together existing research, interview findings and workshop conclusions. The report aims to encourage the successful development of partnerships, whilst acknowledging their drawbacks. The debate continues as to whether such partnerships reduce accountability but the horse has already bolted. As states are no longer able to meet all the social needs of society, partnerships can offer a meaningful way to tackle social exclusion. What this report tries to do is promote best practice and help readers understand that the world is changing, and that governance is changing along with everything else.

RAWOO (2001) 'Balancing Ownership and Partnership in Development Research', *RAWOO Review Report*, **The Hague: Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council (RAWOO).**

The issue of North-South cooperation in research for development is the core theme of this report which review the activities of the Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council (RAWOO) in 1999 and 2000. A major part of the Council's work in the period under review focused on the need to change the model for cooperation – which traditionally gave the Northern partners the major say – by enabling Southern partners (in research, government and civil society) to exert more influence over decision making regarding research agendas and research priorities,

and by increasing their say in the governance and management of joint research programmes, including the grant-making process. The key challenge is to find a proper balance between the principle of Southern 'ownership' of research programmes, and the principle of mutually beneficial cooperation between Southern and Northern partners.

This report emphasises that in a genuine partnership Northern researchers are no longer defining the terms of the exercise and 'showing the way'. Instead, they become collaborators, offering their input in a process which in essence is driven by the needs of the partner from the developing country. Southern partners have an equal say and equal influence over the way research programmes are governed and managed.

RAWOO (1999) 'Building Bridges in Research for Development', *RAWOO Review Report*, The Hague: Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council (RAWOO).

This report examines the major challenges in the work of the Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council (RAWOO) and it presents the RAWOO approach to enhancing knowledge for development and the basic policy principles underlying this approach. The 'building bridges' metaphor describes the major thrust of RAWOO's work. Generating knowledge for development requires 'building bridges' between stakeholders, between disciplines and between researchers in the North and the South.

RAWOO (2001) 'North-South Research Partnerships: Issues and Challenges', *RAWOO Publication* 22, The Hague: Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council (RAWOO).

This report calls for transparency and accountability from all partners. It emphasises that partnerships only work if they are prepared in a systematic way through an intensive consultative process along structured lines, in which all stakeholders jointly reach a consensus about the research agenda. A clear management structure ensures that the programme is carried out as planned. Changes are acceptable only if they are made in consultation with all stakeholders. Without trust between the partners, partnerships do not work. Northern partners tend to worry about resources being used improperly; Southern partners worry about entering into agreements which turn out to be against their own or their country's interests.

A genuine willingness to exchange knowledge on an equal basis is indispensable for a good partnership. If solving development problems is one of the main reasons for the partnership, the Southern partner absolutely must play an autonomous role in shaping the partnership. The Southern partner's autonomy definitely has to include the right to decide which type of expertise it wants from the Northern partner, in which quantity, and at which level – junior or senior. Research to be conducted in the North on topics relevant to the subject of the research programme should not be excluded.

Reback, C., A. Cohen, T. Freese and S. Shoptaw (2002) Making collaboration work; key components of practice/research partnerships, *Journal of Drug Issue* 32(3).

This paper outlines several key components of successful practice/research collaboration: forming equal partnerships; bilateral communication; ensuring non-hierarchical collaborations; and appropriate dissemination of findings. Many concrete benefits can result from collaborative research projects, but building partnerships requires resources and a process of negotiation.

More effective efforts to solve common problems and reach common goals are likely to result from an effective partnership.

Sommermann, K-P. (1999) 'Managing Accountability in Intergovernmental Partnerships' *PUMA/RD* (99)4/Final, Paris: OECD.

The term 'partnership' has a persuasively positive connotation. Partnerships are personal or legal relationships which are characterised by the confidential sharing of burdens or responsibilities. Who will declare his or her opposition against any kind of partnership? In the world of public administration, partnerships seem to be even more attractive if they aim at better performance and improved efficiency of public authorities. However, performance, efficiency and effectiveness are not the only values that governments must concern themselves with. Public authorities are not private enterprises, whose position is primarily defined by the market. They have a public duty which derives from their constitutional and legal authority and principles, among which the protection of individual rights is a pre-eminent one in modern democracies. Therefore, intergovernmental partnerships can never be an end in themselves; they have to serve the public interest, i.e. the interests of the citizens.

There is a difference between vertical partnerships and horizontal partnerships which is useful also for a legal consideration of accountability management. In horizontal partnerships, e.g. cooperation between local governments, between regions or between States, the status of the parties concerned will generally be the same or at least comparable, however the powers and functions of public bodies involved in vertical partnerships will be different, often accompanied by relationships of subordination, so that it can become difficult to speak of a real partnership.

Sieber, P. and T. Braunschweig (2004) 'Choosing the Right Projects, Designing Selection Processes for North-South Research Partnership Programme', August Draft, Berne: The Swiss Commission for Research Partnership with Developing Countries (KFPE).

This manual provides guidelines on how to design and implement selection processes that support funding decisions of North-South research partnerships (NSRP). NSRP are defined as activities where groups of scientists from two or more countries in the North and the South carry out long-term collaborative research on issues that are important to all partners. NSRP aim at enabling exchange and mutual learning based on complementary skills and knowledge.

Is a good research partnership an objective in itself or rather a means that contribute to objectives such as development and capacity building? The manual argues for the latter. It offers best practices, illustrative examples and points to potential pitfalls. Furthermore, it is flexible to a wide range of thematically different NSRP.

Svensson, B. and A. Östhol (2001) 'From Government to Governance: Regional Partnerships in Sweden', *Regional and Federal Studies* 11(2).

Private-public partnership is a key concept for understanding the transformation of regional governance in Sweden. The introduction of Regional Growth Agreements (RGAs) as a new element of industrial policy is the latest illustration of this development. This article analyses the emergence of regional partnerships in the processing of RGAs in Swedish regions. Questions dealt with consequences for the public-private balance, democratic accountability, and the pressure for regional reforms. The results reveal that regional partnerships seem ready to take greater

responsibility in the field of industrial policy, but also raise questions about who should be included and who is accountable. It is also questionable whether coherent regions will emerge before substantial reforms of regional government are implemented to match more spontaneous processes of regionalisation.

Velho, L. (2002) 'Research Capacity Building in Nicaragua: From Partnership with Sweden to Ownership and Social Accountability', *INTECH, Discussion Papers Series*, No 2002-9. Maastricht: United Nations University, Institute for New Technologies.

This paper analyses the Nicaragua-Sweden partnership to build research capacity in Nicaragua with support from the research division of the Swedish International Development Agency (SAREC). It looks at the history of this partnership and identifies the main outcomes and impacts, based on extensive quantitative and qualitative data collection from various sources.

In conclusion the paper challenges the assumption that a partnership between donor and recipient countries is inherently fair and beneficial for the latter. The findings point out that, while SAREC has ultimate control over the funds, where and how they are disbursed, the recipient's final recourse is the exit option. To create conditions for the recipient countries that would enable recipients to move more towards ownership and determine themselves what type of programmes, training and advice is more appropriate, the paper makes the following recommendations: put in place a board of local stakeholders to negotiate, monitor and evaluate the programme on a systematic basis; be more concerned with social accountability and strengthen the voice of the recipient country in negotiating the programme; coordinate with programmes that support the national budgets of the recipient country.

Wallace, T. and J. Chapman (2003) 'Some Realities behind the Rhetoric of Downward Accountability', Working paper presented at INTRAC Evaluation Conference, The Netherlands, 1 April 2003.

This working paper explores some of the issues arising from the current way that donors and UK NGOs structure their reporting and accountability requirements, and challenges some of the beliefs about partnership, participation and bottom-up development processes. The data is drawn from a three-country study of policies and procedures around aid disbursement and how these affect and shape relationships between Northern and Southern development agencies. The research, covering UK, South Africa and Uganda, is ongoing and this paper is an early attempt to document some of the findings around accountability and impact assessment from the UK part of the research.

The paper gives a broad overview, the detailed analysis – NGO by NGO – will be presented later in the UK country case study. This paper argues that while the stated commitment of UK NGOs and donors is to downward accountability and promoting local ownership and control of development, the policies and procedures that surround the disbursement and accounting for aid money ensure upward accountability dominates. This domination is part of a wider problem of domination by donors of their recipients, which skews the relationship and undermines the potential for these relationships to work well as partnerships. Yet it is partnership that most agencies involved in development believe in and want to achieve.

Warner, M. (2003) *Partnerships for Sustainable Development: Do We Need Partnership Brokers?* **London: Overseas Development Institute.**

Unlike contractual relationships or public-private partnerships, partnerships for sustainable development seek not to shift responsibility and risk from one party to another, but to share risks, pool resources and deliver mutual benefits. This paper contends that partnerships for sustainable development are not different in principle from conventional business-to-business strategic alliances.

The paper describes some of the actual steps taken to formulate a multi-sector partnership to manage income restoration following community displacement from coal mining activity in West Bengal, India, are described, highlighting the partnering activities in which an external third-party broker played a role.

Wildridge, V., S. Childs, L. Cawthra and B. Madge (2004) 'How to create successful partnerships – a review of the literature', *Health Information and Libraries Journal* **21(June).**

This literature review covers a wide range of publications that provide an overview of the wider topic of partnership working. Partnership working is a key component of the UK Government's modernisation agenda, particularly in the health sector. However, the principles of achieving successful partnership are generally applicable. The review concentrates on literature that can provide guidance for people planning to set up a partnership or re-evaluating an existing partnership. It comprises: definitions of partnership working; types of partnership; partnership initiatives; critical success factors; barriers; benefits; and government policy on partnership working.

World Bank (2000) 'Partnering with civil society: an electronic discussion on partnership for development', 29 November 1999 to 28 January 2000, available at www2.worldbank.org/ hm/participate/0002.html.

Part of this discussion focuses around the conception that what makes partnership different from other forms of participation and collaboration are its implied components of equality of decision making and mutual influence. Other 'principles of partnership' delineated by NGO scholars include mutual trust and respect, reciprocal accountability, transparency, and, though less common, a long-term commitment to working together and building the capacity of one's partners.

It can be argued that the appropriateness of a partnership approach is dependent upon the attitudes of the proposed partners and other factors in the environment that can support partnership work. Are the proposed partners willing to embrace partnership in all its dimensions? Is it possible to come to agreement among them on what those dimensions are and how they should be articulated for accountability purposes? On the other hand, is full agreement up-front necessary to initiate partnership exploration or even partnership work? Must one begin with an 'enabling' environment? In other words, can partnership be designed or must it evolve? Under what circumstances is one approach more effective than the other?

4.2 Key Websites

AccountAbility, The Partnership Accountability Programme
www.accountability.org.uk

The Partnership Accountability programme, supported by the Ford Foundation, explores the basis on, and the degree to which multi-sector partnerships build accountability frameworks and processes appropriate to their mandates, claims and constituencies. The programme engages with leaders in multi-sector sustainability partnerships through research, the development of case studies, and meetings of leaders in such partnerships to brainstorm and 'forward' cast about the future of these partnership models.

Association of Strategic Alliance Professionals
http://www.strategic-alliances.org

This website makes information available related to the Association as well as a variety of resources on strategic alliances, from workshop proceedings to members' publications to best practice guide books.

BOND, Learning in partnerships
http://www.bond.org.uk/lte/nsworkshop.htm

Drawing on available literature and issues raised during a two-day BOND/Exchange workshop on Learning in North-South Partnerships, this site offers a series of reports and articles which explore learning in the context of NGO partnerships.

Building Partnerships for Development (BPD) in Water and Sanitation
http://www.bpd-waterandsanitation.org

BPD Water and Sanitation is an informal network of partners who seek to demonstrate that strategic partnerships involving business, government and civil society can achieve more at the local level to improve access to safe water and effective sanitation for the poor than any of the groups acting individually. The site makes available a variety of resources related to partnerships in general, and water and sanitation issues in particular.

Cambridge Programme for Industry, Partnership Matters – Current Issues in Cross-Sector Collaboration
http://www.cpi.cam.ac.uk/pccp/journal.html

This is the website for the Postgraduate Certificate in Cross-Sector Partnership at the University of Cambridge. The first two issues of the annual 'thought leadership' publication on cross-sector partnership are available here. These issues are designed to:
- Exemplify cutting edge partnership thinking and practice;
- Provide thought leadership for the partnership movement;
- Consolidate the learning for past and future course participants.

Capacity.org
http://www.capacity.org

Capacity.org offers a quarterly newsletter, a platform for exchange and access to a wealth of background reading on capacity development. Issue 6 of the newsletter, in particular, throws some light on the concept and practice of partnership in a particular realm of development cooperation – 'twinning' – the institutional cooperation between Northern and Southern training, research and public sector organisations. The focus is on the understanding given to partnership by the different partners involved, and especially on how partnership is seen to support capacity mobilisation and capacity building.

IDRC, Learning Partnerships – A review of IDRC Secretariats: literature review
http://web.idrc.ca/fr/ev-26849-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

This site provides a comprehensive assessment of the extensive amount of current literature and research on topics related to the IDRC Secretariat Review. For the purposes of the Review, and the discussion that followed, this body of work is organised around four themes:
- Current Trends in Public Sector Management
- Managing for Results in Research, Innovative and Development Organisations
- Public Sector Accountability and Governance Issues
- Strategic Frameworks for Collaborative Partnerships

Institute on Governance – Strengthening Policy Partnerships
http://www.iog.ca

Strengthening Policy Partnerships: A Learning Network Linking Policy Experts from Government and Civil Society is a CIDA-funded project. It involves case studies in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines and Canada on the evolution of partnerships between government and civil society on policy related to the social agenda. A book containing case studies, a brief on lessons learned and an introductory note on the nature of partnerships was completed by the Institute on Governance in Fall 2004 and is available to download on the website.

InterAction – Global Partnerships for Effective Assistance
http://www.interaction.org/capmaign

The Global Partnership for Effective Assistance is a campaign 'to save lives and build self-sufficiency by increasing development and humanitarian assistance, improving aid effectiveness, and building international partnerships'. In the broadest sense, this campaign aims to help reinvigorate America's role in partnering to build safer, more stable and democratic societies.

The campaign is an initiative of the American Council for Voluntary International Action. Publications are available on this site, including the 'African Liaison Program Initiative (2000), Mutual Accountability in African Development Relationships: A report of the ALPI sub-regional conference' prepared by InterAction's Division of Development Policy and Practice.

INTRAC
www.intrac.org

INTRAC – the International NGO Training and Research Centre – supports NGOs and CSOs around the world by exploring policy issues, and strengthening management and organisational effectiveness. The site provides a variety of resources on partnerships between Northern and Southern NGOs. A large number of in-house publications are also available.

MERCY CORPS, Organizational Commitment to Local Partnership and Capacity Building
http://www.mercycorps.org/items/2013/

Mercy Corps' approach to strengthening civil society puts the utmost priority on working with local partners. They believe that local partnerships help their programmes generate sustainable legacies. Because partnering with local entities often includes capacity building, they address both issues of capacity building and partnership.

While acknowledging that every programme is different depending on context and objectives, the site recommends some characteristics of success to keep in mind when working with local partners: be strategic; be transparent; ensure true partnership; maintain separate identities; respect their mission; consider the future; offer training; and outsource capacity building locally.

National Research Council Canada
http://www.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/aboutUs/audit_partnerships_e.html

This is an online summary of an audit of partnerships in the institutes of the National Research Council. The audit assesses the risk management practices and provides suggestions to mitigate risks related to partnerships; assess current practices and provides suggestions on strengthen accountability in partnerships (e.g. collaborative arrangements); and assesses completeness of partnership arrangements, etc.

National Science Foundation, Strategic Research Partnerships
http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/srs/nsf01336/start.htm

Online report: National Science Foundation, Division of Science Resources Studies, Strategic Research Partnerships: Proceedings from an National Science Foundation Workshop, NSF 01-336, Project Officers, John E. Jankowski, Albert N. Link, Nicholas S. Vonortas (Arlington, VA 2001).

The objective of the workshop was to identify for National Science Foundation and the National Science Board the policy needs for, and available data on, indicators related to the formation, activities, and economic consequences of alliances and strategic research partnerships (SRP). An SRP was broadly defined as an innovation-based relationship that involves, at least partly, a significant effort in research and development.

The Nordic Partnership
www.nordicpartnership.org

The Nordic Partnership is an NGO-business network founded in 2001 by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Danish media centre Monday Morning and key corporate players operating in the

Nordic region. Using a partnership approach, the members of the Nordic Partnership work together to find new ways of making sustainable initiatives more attractive and rewarding to business. The website provides fresh perspectives, challenges and recommendations to the 'rules of the game' that relate to sustainable development.

The One World Trust
www.oneworldtrust.org

Through its Global Accountability Project, the One World Trust has developed a framework of accountability for applying to intergovernmental organisations, transnational corporations and international NGOs. A series of resources in relation to accountability are available.

Simon Fraser University, Research Partners
http://www.sfu.ca/uilo/publications/rp/rp.html

Research Partners is a publication of the University/Industry Liaison Office (UILO) at Simon Fraser University (SFU). A range of successful SFU/industry partnerships are profiled, many of which have been ongoing for a number of years. What becomes clear when reading about these partnerships, is that the university researcher and company are not the only beneficiaries. Such partnerships play a significant role in stimulating investment, increasing employment, and improving Canada's competitiveness. Issues of the publication from January 1995 to present are available online.

Support and Liaison Office, Strategic Research Partnerships
http://www.partnership-programmes.org

The Support and Liaison Office, or S&LO, is a Dutch based, relatively small office, with the overall aim to assist in the effective implementation of the two ongoing Demand Driven Research Programmes: the Health Research Programme in Ghana (HRP) and the Biodiversity Research Programme (BRP) in the Philippines. These research programmes have the aim to develop innovative North-South research partnerships. The S&LO office is located in the Netherlands, and is executed by ETC Foundation in Leusden. It receives support by DGIS (the Dutch Ministry of Development Cooperation), separately from the two research programmes.

This site provides information on the S&LO and links to BRP and HRP and also contains working documents relevant to the Dutch institutions collaborating in these programmes.

The main objective of the Office is the facilitation of an effective implementation of the Demand Driven Research Programmes, BRP and the HRP, in the Netherlands. The specific objectives of S&LO are:

- Effective functioning of the Joint Programme Committees and the management and co-ordination units (National Support Secretariat) of each of the research programmes;
- Adequate provision of information about the programmes, the research approach as well as the achieved results to Dutch researchers, and to a broader public in the Netherlands involved in research for development cooperation;
- Good access to information on relevant knowledge and experiences in the Netherlands for the Southern participants in the partnership programmes.

Treasury Board of Canada, Secretariat – Managing Collaborative Arrangements
http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rc-cr/guide_rm/partB_e.asp

This site is a guide for regional managers on how to deal with collaborative arrangements. It tackles issues such as shared accountability, indicators of effective accountability and accountability mechanisms for collaborative arrangements. An accountability template of the Social Union Framework Agreement is also available.

USAID, Partnering for Results: Intersectoral Partnerships
http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/isp

The use of intersectoral partnerships (ISPs) as a development tool is expanding rapidly as the development community increasingly recognises the importance of institutions that combine market, governance and voluntaristic characteristics. ISPs strengthen individual organisations within each sector, offer a mechanism to resolve specific development issues, and can lay the foundation for broader, systemic change. With collaborative action, government, business and civil society can take advantage of creative synergies and achieve outcomes that are impossible for any one of them to achieve alone.

This website provides information on what ISPs are, why they are an important development strategy, and how donors and other organisations can facilitate their growth. This website will also be used as a clearinghouse to store new information about the development and success of ISPs.

US Department of Interior
http://www.doi.gov/partnerships

This is the official website on partnerships of the US Department of Interior. It provides extensive information on building partnerships and partnership tools, and offers comprehensive information on partnership legal frameworks – with specific information on limitations for partnerships, as well as a page on partnership ethics.