PARTNERSHIP MATTERS

CURRENT ISSUES IN CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION

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CURRENT ISSUES IN CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION

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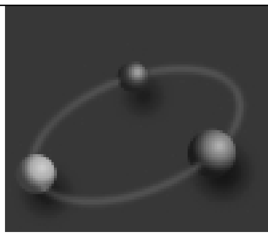

Introduction

There is growing recognition that cross-sector partnerships between business, government and civil society organisations offer the possibility of meeting pressing social, economic and environmental challenges. By sharing the skills, resources and expertise of each sector and working in collaboration at local, national or international levels such partnerships have the potential to arrive at constructive and innovative solutions to development concerns in a more integrated and sustainable way.

However, despite the international enthusiasm for this new development paradigm there is also a danger that the obstacles facing partnerships are ignored as sectors embrace the concept without a clear enough awareness of the challenges involved in partnership-building. In addition concerns have been expressed about regulation, accountability and governance in relation to partnerships and these also require closer scrutiny. More rigorous research, monitoring and evaluation of cross-sector partnerships is obviously needed in order to demonstrate how workable and effective they actually are and to share what works and what does not. This is of particular importance where cross-sector partnerships seek to address such intractable issues as poverty eradication and conflict prevention.

Partnership Matters is a new annual journal which examines current thinking and practice in cross-sector partnerships. It has emerged from the Cross Sector Partnership Initiative (CSPI) developed collaboratively by the University of Cambridge's Programme for Industry, The Copenhagen Centre and The Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum (see inside back cover).

Central to CSPI's work is a new Postgraduate Certificate in Cross-Sector Partnership. This course, which has already received wide acclaim, places considerable emphasis on experiential learning and sharing practical experience with the added benefit of the involvement of international participants from across the world. In 2002, participants came from Australia, Bosnia, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Germany, Holland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Mexico, Nigeria, Palestine, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden, UK, USA, Venezuela and Zambia as well as a good mix of sectoral backgrounds. By bringing together practical partnership experiences from diverse organisations, countries and cultures, and drawing from a variety of different academic disciplines, the programme has successfully begun to promote, develop and exchange new approaches and ideas in cross-sector collaboration.

Partnership Matters seeks to share some of these rich new insights into partnerships by drawing on original learning material from the CSPI programme. It is hoped that its content will contribute to new thought leadership in the area of cross-sector collaboration while also serving as a valuable tool to consolidate learning for past and future course participants.

The selection of material included in this first issue is intended to give the reader an idea of the scope, depth and creative approach to partnership issues covered in the inaugural year of the programme. It includes two "think–pieces"; one by Simon Zadek, Chief Executive of AccountAbility and external advisor to the CSPI programme, and the other by David Runciman, lecturer in Political Theory at Cambridge University; a paper by Ken

Caplan, one of the programme tutors; and summaries of four of the final projects submitted by participants; Christina Atako of the Niger Delta Development Commission in Nigeria, Joerg Hartmann from BASF in Germany, Kishan Khoday of UNDP Indonesia and Jonathan Stacey of BirdLife International in the United Kingdom.

"Partnership Futures" by Simon Zadek discusses possible future scenarios for partnerships following the high profile they received during the Johannesburg World Summit for Sustainable Development in August 2002. Zadek suggests that their potential for playing an effective role in addressing development concerns will ultimately depend upon their ability to address crucial issues relating to scale and accountability.

David Runciman's article "Partnering the State", questions how real a partnership with the state can be expected to be, in view of the its impersonal nature. Partnership, he affirms, suggests a personal relationship in which each partner knows who they are dealing with. The state, however, owes its very existence to assuming burdens and tasks that individuals would not and cannot assume for themselves. We should therefore be suspicious of partnering the state as we cannot be sure who we are dealing with!

An important learning mechanism for the course is the use of "trigger papers" written by the tutors. These papers are intended to motivate thinking and provoke debate about issues relating to partnerships among participants. Ken Caplan, Director of the London-based Building Partnerships for Development's Water and Sanitation Cluster, shares his thoughts here on the need for more rigorous use of language in discussing partnerships. "The Purists Partnership, De-bunking the Terminology of Partnerships" examines the current rhetoric surrounding partnerships and suggests that we need to be more honest about the challenges of multi-sector partnerships in order to ensure that they are used effectively.

The success of the CSPI programme obviously depends primarily on the participants and in this we were not disappointed! The diverse partnership experiences of the first year group provided a wealth of learning material which was tapped into through discussion, debate, reflective essays, group projects and a final individual project in which participants were able to demonstrate how the learning they had gained from the course could be applied to their own specific partnership activities. In order to demonstrate the extraordinary range and quality of these final projects, four graduates of the course, each writing from a distinct sector and cultural perspective, have contributed summaries of their work for the journal.

Christiana Atako examines the public sector rationale for partnerships in Nigeria through research in the Niger Delta community of Akassa. Her findings show that although the government has a role to play in partnerships for sustainable development they have not fulfilled this potential and a number of recommendations are made for encouraging them to engage more deeply in such collaboration.

Building on the idea of a *'licence to operate'*, Joerg Hartmann, explores the idea of a company's *"licence to co-operate"* as the business case for engagement in cross-sector partnerships and social reporting. This licence, he asserts, involves a company's ability to co-operate with all sorts of stakeholders, something that is crucial as competitiveness increases in the age of globalisation.

Kishan Khoday suggests that partnerships have emerged as a form of "negotiated rule-making". A partnership approach has developed, he argues, in order to manage conflicts between the mandates of public agencies, the interests of business and the values of civil society groups in defining the rules and boundaries of the new global economy.

The capacity for a strategic biodiversity partnership between Rio Tinto, a multinational mining company, and BirdLife International, a global network of environmental non-governmental organisations, is assessed by Jonathan Stacey. He provides a sample of an experimental Strategy Matrix as a tool to identify and rate existing and potential partnerships in order to give broad indications of where the partnership programme should concentrate time and funding resources. Rio Tinto have already expressed an interest in the matrix and discussions are underway as to how such an exercise can inform the development of their Biodiversity Strategy.

This is an ambitious start for a new journal but we believe that *Partnership Matters* will both demonstrate and reinforce the innovative stance of the CSPI and, we hope, make a strong and original contribution to the development of thinking and learning around cross-sector partnerships.

Last but not least we would like to thank our colleague Leda Stott (also a tutor on the post-graduate programme) for the excellent job she has done as this journal's editor.

Louise Kjær
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The Copenhagen Centre

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Partnership Futures

By **Simon Zadek**

THE 2002 WORLD SUMMIT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN JOHANNESBURG MARKED A COMING OF AGE FOR PARTNERSHIPS. THE KEY QUESTION NOW IS WHAT WILL BECOME OF THEM? SIMON ZADEK SPECULATES ON SOME POSSIBLE FUTURE SCENARIOS FOR PARTNERSHIPS WHICH WILL ULTIMATELY, HE ARGUES, DEPEND ON CRUCIAL ISSUES RELATING TO SCALE AND ACCOUNTABILITY, BOTH OF WHICH NEED TO BE ADDRESSED CAREFULLY IF PARTNERSHIPS ARE TO PLAY A KEY ROLE IN AN EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.

Simon Zadek *is Chief Executive of AccountAbility, author of* The Civil Corporation *and many other books, articles and reports. More information about AccountAbility's work, publications and membership is at www.accountability.org.uk*

August 2002, winter in Jo'burg. An estimated 60,000 people packed their bags in order to join in the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Amongst them were many of us who had vowed forever to avoid the hubris, the financial and environmental costs and, so often, the disappointment associated with such mega-summits. Yet here we were again, shipping bodies and souls across the planet for a few short days in an effort to talk our way through and out of the pervasive and daunting social and environmental challenges facing us.

Difficult and challenging, perhaps. But this gathering was far more than the cynic's picture of a modern-day, Babylonian folly. Its antecedents in Monterrey, Beijing, Copenhagen and Rio, just to name a few, all played crucially important roles in driving forward progressive agendas. More than anything, mega-summits generate change by ushering in new players and processes onto the world stage. These players and processes are validated through a new framing of the nature of challenges, lessons from the past, and reasons why and how things can be different in the future.

In this light, it is easy to see that Jo'burg was more than anything about partnerships. Much of the event, whatever topic was being addressed, sought to validate (or challenge) the legitimacy and potential contribution that the business community could play, working in partnership with public bodies and civil society organisations. The Summit's silver bullet and *bête noire* was those partnerships created from business's choice, whether for market-related, fiscal or statutory reasons, to address social, economic and environmental aims as part of its day-to-day practice and underlying success model.

It is an exciting and also a somewhat eerie moment when a movement comes of age. What was considered absurd, naïve or just plain silly becomes 'the obvious'. What seemed unlikely or impossible becomes normal, and rapidly passé. Scant resources skimmed from innocent budgets turn into billion dollar, often one-eyed programmes. What passed as experiments become the 'real thing', as did earlier generations of pre-packaged development solutions.

Where Are We Going?

But the rules of the game change in this transition from the margin to the mainstream. Notably, open season can be and is legitimately declared on business partnerships for development. Criticism is no longer purely a matter for civil activists as it falls within the ambit of the professionals who know most about private-public partnerships and the business community. The core evaluative question posed by these knowledgeable inquirers shifts in this transition from "did something good happen?" to "was it really worth it?"

Most of all, however, come the searching questions about scale and accountability.

Take first the crucial issue of scale. Can partnerships and corporate responsibility contribute sufficiently to addressing development goals for them to warrant an honoured place at the table and associated public patronage and resources? Is our picture of effective development a million blossoms blooming, each one a stand-alone partnership creating business and societal value, profit and environmental security? For many of course, the vision is less chaotic, more aligned to the role of the state as rule-maker rather than marriage-partner. For this group, scaling up partnerships through replication merely reproduces the problem of under-regulated business and markets, or, at best, delivers lots of little gains without addressing the underlying systemic problems.

Another option on the matter of scale is that the partnerships are more than the sum of their parts, but not through unwieldy regulation. AccountAbility and The Copenhagen Centre have recently argued in *Responsible Competitiveness: Corporate Responsibility Clusters in Action* that potential development impacts of partnership and corporate responsibility practices will not be forthcoming unless they are integrated into national economic competitiveness strategies and practices. The arguments presented are particularly relevant to the situation of most developing countries whose economies are often highly dependent on resource and cost-based export competitiveness. Partnerships and corporate responsibility approaches that are not aligned to new forms of economic competitiveness might undermine development, the research argues, by pushing yet more financial value to the brand-end of the value-chain or by favouring global corporations over smaller indigenous businesses. On the positive side, the work offers examples of how corporate responsibility can enhance economic competitiveness.

On the second issue of accountability, it is noteworthy that focus has to date been on the potential for 'bluewash', that commercial interests can pervert development aims, outcomes and institutions. But a report produced by this author and published by Business for Social Responsibility, *Working with Multilaterals,* highlights the dangers of ignoring pervasive accountability shortfalls within public sector and civil society partners as well as real deficits in our understanding of how to build effective partnership accountability. Looking to the future, it argues that multi-stakeholder partnerships will only remain legitimate and serve to deliver business and development benefits if their basis of accountability, including that of each of their participants, is clarified and greatly improved. More generally, the mainstreaming of partnerships forces us away from the view and practice that accountability can be vested in the good intentions, commitment and leadership quality of their creators. At best this is true for the vanguard but scaling-up requires a reliance on more explicit, replicable forms of accountability. This is all the more so where partnerships become a, if not the, key pathway for routing both public funds and private investments, shifting the emphasis from 'new social partnerships' to public-private partnerships as means of delivering public service through private means.

Is This the Future?

It is all too easy to post 'health warnings' about partnerships. Much more difficult is to usefully imagine the longer-term. Forget for a second our near-sighted view on the Summit, for many framed by sadness and weary cynicism. Try another perspective, looking back on the recent events in Jo'burg from the year 2020. From such a standpoint, the 18 years following the Summit would be facts at your fingertips, allowing you to judge the Summit by its more durable significance rather than its momentary importance.

Looking back from 2020, it was obvious that the Summit's real outcome was to open the floodgates to public-private partnerships as a primary development vehicle. Testimony to this outcome was the multitude of operational partnerships created in the first years following the Summit. These early partnerships were, of course, a mixed bag. Following the World Bank-facilitated 'Business Partnership for Development' initiative, some directly helped real people in real situations, particularly the ones that utilised the operational infrastructure of the business community. Others unfortunately followed quite different pathways, commercialising and reducing the availability of 'public goods' such as water and health care, wasting public and private money and draining the energies of communities, activists and the more enlightened business leaders.

In the years following the Summit the arguments about whether to have partnerships with business for development waned. As in the wider debate on globalisation, the ideological question of *'whether?'* became subsumed by the policy questions of *'to what effect?'* This development was not really about technical or managerial issues, although literature and consultants abounded on these micro-level challenges. It concerned the more profound related issues of accountability and scale.

Our recent history, you will all no doubt recall, went like this. Five 'development decades' preceding the Summit had shown that incremental change was just not enough – it left most people standing still or, all too often, worse off than when they started. Credibility of the partnership approach therefore depended on it achieving a (positive) 'development discontinuity', a demonstrable leap in social and environmental gains. In seeking to achieve this, tens of thousands of partnerships were created, rapidly becoming the entry condition for accessing public funds for development. Beyond this, many of the most impactful partnerships moved rapidly away from voluntary associations to become contract-based commercial arrangements, largely exporting the experience in Europe and elsewhere of public service delivery through public-private partnerships operating with income-based public payments.

Achieving scale meant bigger, not just more. Ever-larger and more ambitious partnerships were created involving the world's largest corporations joining at the hip with under-resourced governments, multilaterals and civil society partners. Global partnerships became complex, multi-billion dollar enterprises with staff and offices sprawling across the continents. These partnerships became, generally with the best will in the world, laws unto themselves, accountable to everyone through 'stakeholder engagement', and so to no one in particular.

Most partnerships, particularly the larger ones, suffered the same fate as their public sector predecessors. Personal, political and commercial interests replaced innovation based on social entrepreneurship. Cultures of low performance set in, driven by the high transaction costs endemic to partnerships, a lack of focus and, increasingly, straightforward corruption. Public demand for greater accountability shifted their focus from business to partnerships and from partnerships to their constituent partners, notably public bodies and civil society organisations. Calls for greater statutory regulation moved beyond business transparency and foreign direct liability as the first cycle of lawsuits emerged targeted at partnerships over their alleged misdemeanours. Partnerships began to appear as contingent liabilities rather than assets on company balance sheets. Gradually, the partnership approach suffered the same ignominious fate as its antecedents, easy-win 'silver bullets' for development.

Or This...?

But of course none of this has really happened. The history of partnerships over the next two decades is waiting to be invented, by us. Build your own scenario, hopefully one less miserable, less predictable and with better development outcomes. A preferred pathway from the Summit would be based on a recognition by the advocates and architects of tomorrow's partnerships that effective development requires meaningful accountability. This would mean a greater emphasis on the terms on which business behaviour is pro-development and a little less on the possibilities for business voluntarily contributing to development. It would mean considering how best to balance innovative leadership, partnerships and regulation in creating more inclusive and equitable markets, rather than how best to build partnerships mainly to manage risk and reputation.

In this scenario the Summit would set the stage for building effective approaches to partnership accountability. This could start in two places. The first would be to extend current work on corporate disclosure to embrace partnerships, particularly emerging standards for reporting (Global Reporting Initiative Guidelines) and related assurance (AA1000 Assurance Standard). The second would be to promote a clearer sense of what is good partnership governance. This would require a hard look at accountability issues for each partner (including, but not just, business) as it relates to the collective, partnership endeavour, as well as for the partnership itself.

Partnerships involving business could make a real contribution to development. Taking this possibility seriously means honesty, leadership and innovation in facing the matter of their accountability. Without this, partnerships for development will go the same way as other 'unaccountability initiatives', not only deemed illegitimate but ultimately ineffective. With robust and credible accountability at their core, on the other hand, partnerships could establish their legitimate place in an effective development process.

Drawn from comment pieces published in Ethical Corporation, July & August, 2002

Partnering the State

By **David Runciman**

PARTNERSHIP SUGGESTS A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP IN WHICH EACH PARTNER KNOWS WHO THEY ARE DEALING WITH. THE STATE, HOWEVER, IS IMPERSONAL AND OWES ITS VERY EXISTENCE TO ASSUMING BURDENS AND TASKS THAT INDIVIDUALS CANNOT, AND WOULD NOT, ASSUME FOR THEMSELVES. THIS PAPER ARGUES THAT, IN VIEW OF ITS ALMOST FICTITIOUS NATURE, CAUTION SHOULD BE EXERCISED WHEN PARTNERING WITH THE STATE.

David Runciman *is a lecturer in Political Theory in the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Cambridge. He was previously a research fellow at Trinity College, Cambridge. He is the author of Pluralism and the Personality of the State (CUP, 1997) and has also written widely as a journalist, for the Guardian and London Review of Books, among other publications.*

Partnership is by definition a personal relationship. This is of course true in an everyday sense. When we speak now of someone as our 'partner', we mean that we have a very personal and intimate relationship with them, founded on a recognition of their personal qualities. Even when the relationship is something less than intimate, the everyday language of partnership presupposes that we know who we are dealing with and have good reasons for binding ourselves with them: that we have come to trust them, like them, admire them, rely on them or simply to know them better than others do.

But the personal nature of partnership relations is also true in a more formal or legalistic sense. A partnership in law is an association whose identity is determined by the personal identity of the partners (that is why, for example, a partnership of lawyers or accountants will often be called what they are called – Smith, Smith, Peters & Jones, etc.). Partners in law are personally responsible for what the partnership does in their name (hence, when a legal partnership goes bust, the partners may find that they are bankrupted as well). Partnership in this sense can be contrasted with incorporation. Corporate bodies are legally something more than the individual sum of their parts. Corporations may act in law in ways that do not personally bind individual shareholders or directors or employees (and when they go bust, the corporate principle of limited liability can rescue the individuals who might otherwise be personally implicated). A corporation is able to abstract away from individuals, and to provide a kind of legal fiction onto which they can unload some but not all of their personal responsibilities. Partnerships are much more all-or-nothing affairs. Partners sink or swim together.

It is this combination of the everyday and the more legalistic uses of partnership that explains much of its appeal in the current terminology of public life. It is an accessible idea, with a formal underpinning, both of which reinforce the importance of trust, and openness, and personal understanding. But partnership is also a dangerous idea in public life, for the simple reason that so many of the people and institutions we deal with in public life are required to behave impersonally. This is true of all manner of bureaucracies and bureaucrats, of government agencies and legal officers. But it is also quintessentially true of what remains the single dominant institution of modern public life: the state itself. Indeed, the state could be called *the* impersonal institution. It owes its existence to its very impersonality.

Certainly, this is true historically. The modern European state emerged in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in order to rescue politics from too close an identification with the personal capacities of individual rulers. It was easier to raise the money to fight wars, either in the form of taxation or debt (and the more taxes a state raised, the more money it could borrow), if the thing that was raising the money was something more than just a man (or, much more occasionally, woman). Modern armies, bureaucracies, parliaments and political parties are all the product of this break with the idea that politics meant the personal service of the king. The state remained, as it has always remained, the vehicle for personal ambitions, but it could sustain far greater ambitions if it had a structure of impersonal power behind it.

The modern state became impersonal in order to expand what could be done through politics. And it is the vastly enhanced scale of modern politics that reinforces the impersonality of the state. Modern political life imposes burdens that simply cannot be borne by individuals in any personal capacity. This is most obviously the case in matters of finance. The public debts of modern states are too great to be assumed by individuals, particularly by the individual members of their governments. If we really thought that the British government, rather than the British state, was responsible for the national debt, then the British state would go bust, because the British government is made up of a changing cast of men and women none of whom is remotely rich enough to offer the appropriate security. The debt is owed by the state, to which the assets controlled by the British government must belong. As well as the financial burdens, the state also assumes moral burdens that modern individuals cannot and would not want to assume for themselves. The state performs certain tasks, particularly acts of violence, which we do not wish to attribute to individuals or groups of individuals in any personal capacity. If we did, the suspicion is that no one would agree to do them. So politicians, and soldiers, and law enforcement officers act in the name of the state. Of course, individuals can overstep the mark, and then they are personally liable for what they do. But if they don’t overstep the mark, responsibility for what they do lies with the state.

This view of the impersonal character of modern politics is not always an attractive one, and there have been plenty of people willing to challenge it. To take one example, the philosophical tradition of social contract theory, which tries to manufacture the state out of the mutual obligations of its individual members, represents an enduring attempt to reintroduce a sense of personal responsibility into politics. For this reason, social contract theory rests on a partnership model of the state. But for the same reason, social contract theory is implausible. It is implausible historically: states were not formed when all individuals in a particular area bound themselves to terms of reciprocal responsibility; they were formed when one individual (the king) looked for ways of evading personal responsibility. But it is also true that spreading the burden of the state among all its members does not solve the basic problem. It makes no more sense to think of the national debt being shared among all of a state's citizens than it does to think of it shared among the members of its government. If we all owed our individual share of what the state owes, many of us would not be able to pay. So we don't owe a *share*: taxation is the state's way of raising the money *it* owes, which is why we don't all have to hand over the same amount. Equally, it makes little sense to think of the state's moral or legal burdens being distributed in tiny packages among all its individual citizens. The idea that the state is able, for example, to kill in wartime because we can parcel out the guilt in manageably small portions among the entire citizenry is at least as morally repugnant as the impersonal view it is meant to rescue us from.

The state is not a partnership. It is a kind of corporation. It is the impersonal, corporate entity to which we attribute responsibilities and burdens that cannot be borne by anyone or anything else. Yet there is an obvious problem with this account. If the state cannot be identified with any real persons, how can it do the things that we wish to spare real persons from having to do? How can it own public property, and owe massive debts, and re-distribute incomes, and declare war, and sue for peace? How can it act, if it is not a real person? The answer lies in the device that has made modern politics possible. The state acts through representation. The state has representatives, who enable it to act, but who do not consider themselves personally responsible for what they do in the state's name. The British government represents the British state, takes decisions on its behalf, controls its assets, sends its troops into battle. All the power lies with the representatives, limited only by the power of others who may claim to represent the state (which can include 'the people' themselves, if they take to the streets in sufficient numbers). The result is that modern politicians can acquire huge amounts of personal power. But they do not acquire equivalent personal responsibility. Ultimate responsibility attaches to the impersonal form of the state.

It is impossible, therefore, to have any truly personal dealings with the state. When we deal with the state voluntarily – when we enter into agreements, sign contracts, exchange goods, even simply shake hands – we are always dealing personally with representatives of the state. The personal qualities of representatives are of course important, both in explaining how they got to assume their positions of power and in judging whether or not to trust them. But the personal qualities of representatives can never be the whole story, because the representatives of the state are never simply themselves. They are both themselves and something else, because they are also playing a part, which is the part of the state. They both are and are not responsible for what they do. It is one of the ironies of this state of affairs that when things go wrong, and representatives take bad decisions in the name of the state, perhaps the best we can hope for is that they will admit their responsibility, and resign. In other words, the fullest responsibility that political representatives can take for their mistakes is to pass the responsibility on to someone else, by laying down their office. At the very least, this should make us suspicious of placing too much trust in the personal qualities of whomever we are dealing with. When personal qualities are detached from personal responsibility, they may be misleading.

The great dilemma of modern politics, since its inception three or four centuries ago, has been how to reconcile the necessary impersonality of the state with the need for real people to act in its name. Various things have been tried: constitutional monarchy, revolutionary dictatorship, parliamentary sovereignty, judicial review. The dilemma remains as acute as ever. Contemporary representative democracies are both highly personalised and deeply impersonal. Electoral success depends on 'personality', and media coverage of modern politics increasingly identifies all questions of whatever magnitude with the personal qualities of the named individuals who are their public face. At the same time, contemporary political structures are increasingly bureaucratic, and technical, and complex.

It is this combination of the personal and the impersonal which makes the language of partnership so appealing and so potentially misleading when thinking about the state. A partnership, both legally and morally, suggests a real relationship between real people. The whole history of modern politics has been an ongoing attempt to persuade individuals of the personal reality of the state, despite its necessary impersonality. The pervasiveness of the language of partnership in public life is one further aspect of this endeavour. But the state is not a real person. It is a kind of fiction, though it is not simply a legal fiction, since unlike other kinds of corporations states have to take on moral and political burdens which are not simply ascribed to them in law. Because the state is not simply a legal fiction, it is all the more important that people believe in it, because it has to have an identity which can stand on its own terms. That is why states are so often identified with their leaders, or governments, or officers, or employees, or citizens.

States are not these things or these people. These people merely represent the state at different times, in different ways and for different reasons. The attempt continues to escape the dilemmas generated by this kind of politics. Most hopes are now pinned on new kinds of law, particularly international law, to provide a framework within which the state, and the roles and duties of its representatives, can be pinned down. It remains to be seen whether this will be any more successful than previous attempts to contain the state in a more secure moral or legal framework. For now, there remain good reasons to be suspicious of applying the idea of partnership to our encounters with the state. ‘Partnership’ depends on knowing who you are dealing with, and you can never be sure who you are dealing with when you deal with the modern state.

Final Project Summaries

AS PART OF THE FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIP (PCCP), PARTICIPANTS ARE ASKED TO COMPLETE AN INDIVIDUAL FINAL PROJECT THAT DEMONSTRATES THEIR ABILITY TO APPLY WHAT THEY HAVE LEARNT FROM THE COURSE TO THEIR OWN PARTNERSHIP SETTING.

THE FOLLOWING SUMMARIES, EACH WRITING FROM A DISTINCT SECTOR AND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE, PROVIDE A SELECTION OF THOSE SUBMITTED IN 2002.

Finding a Place for the Public Sector - a Study of Partnership in Akassa

By **Christiana Atako**

Christiana Atako *has spent many years working on programme and project development on behalf of the public sector in Nigeria, specifically in the Niger Delta region, with a focus on dispersed and remote rural communities.*

There have been many calls for the public sector to assume its full responsibility of addressing socio-economic problems in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria. Considering the nature and scale of these challenges it has become apparent that no one sector can deal with the situation. Partnerships have therefore been suggested as a solution to achieving sustainable development and for fulfilling government objectives. The need therefore arises for the Government to strategise and bring together development agencies to maximally utilise scarce human and natural resources through collaboration to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government provision.

The Government's role in partnerships in the Niger Delta remains unfulfilled and its efforts at redressing social injustice through the provision of sustainable development have failed due to inadequate interventions. This project used research carried out in Akassa, a small neglected area that possesses all the characteristics of a typical Niger Delta community, to analyse partnership practice and determine the extent to which the public sector could function in a partnership and how reliable it could be in such collaboration. The knowledge gained and lessons learned would be adapted to the partnerships of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC). Questionnaires and interviews were used for the study which included a total of 94 respondents; 30 partners and 64 members of various community groups. Data was also collected through observation, documents, records and papers.

The project found that there was wide recognition of the fact that the Government, as the key sector responsible for regulatory frameworks, policies and licences, controller of funds and promoter of an enabling environment for programme implementation, should play a role in partnerships. This was seen as part of the struggle to provide social welfare, protect the environment, create wealth and alleviate poverty, manage human and natural resources, provide educational and employment opportunities, build peace and ensure sustainability. Respondents held that the Government must of necessity drive the process and co-ordinate and integrate forces to enhance its function and gain back its credibility. It was felt that the Government could achieve this through alliances and negotiation with the private sector and development agencies, sponsoring NGOs for human development and environmental protection programmes, and partnering with communities to enhance ownership and sustainability.

However, findings also showed that the public sector had not fulfilled this role, nor had it adequately exploited the partnership option as a way of meeting the social needs of the people. This was evidenced by its low level of reliability, involvement, commitment and effectiveness in partnerships. Greed, corruption, political instability, inconsistency in policy and lack of genuine interest in the welfare of the people were cited as reasons for this.

The study pointed to a number of key lessons for the public sector in general and NDDC in particular:

- The right objective must be set for the right approach to development to be adopted. NDDC should set the objective of *Systematic Change* and should adopt a *bottom-up participatory approach* with other sectors and individuals (beneficiaries of its programmes). This approach should be accompanied by institutional development and capacity-building to ensure sustainability and shared benefits by all. Designing policy with people calls for transparency, accountability and effectiveness.

- Establishing an enduring partnership would entail the public sector (NDDC) driving the process and involving the end-users of the product as major partners. This would ensure programmes that are relevant to, and owned, by the people and assist with the sustainability of the proceeds of the partnerships.

- There should be an attitudinal change from the traditional role of *keeper of the system* to one of *facilitator*. This can be achieved through a consultative and collaborative approach.

- The public sector must do things differently and show more interest and commitment to programmes that impact on the lives of people who look up to it for development. It should assert itself and build trust and credibility by fulfilling its promises and keeping to the terms of the partnership agreement. It needs to change the mindset of people and other sectors and develop confidence in the people by meeting their expectations.

- Bureaucracy, buck-passing, elitism, rigid structure, dogmatism and an election-focus hamper the effectiveness of the public sector. Efforts should be geared towards restructuring the system and modifying the approach to governance.

- The public sector has much to gain from partnerships in the areas of equitable economic growth, human development support and capital, social cohesion, improved operational efficiency and enhanced reputation and credibility.

- Frequent changes in the Government and its policies cause ineffectiveness in programme implementation. Political and economic stability is the key to successful development through partnerships.

- Areas in which the public sector should partner include: provision of technical support for the purpose of sustainability, funding, good legislation and provision of security.

- Inputs expected from the Government in partnerships are administration, support, manpower/personnel, policies and development, statistics, information and data, logistics such as office space, transport, equipment etc. These are within the reach of the Government and therefore should not pose any difficulties.

- Cross-sector partnerships may not always be the best approach. The public sector needs to consider issues such as the nature and scope of the problem and the political and social environment when choosing a development intervention.

- The public sector needs to note that partnerships can fail if they are not well-managed or built on complementary competencies.

In summary, the Government needs to determine an appropriate means of harnessing resources to effect a change in society. A change in their attitude and strategy to development in order to accommodate other development organs is recommended for more successful governance and a more effective role for the public sector in partnerships. A non-committed public sector cannot be effective.

The "Licence to Co-operate" – a Business Case for Engagement in Sustainability Reporting and Cross-Sector Partnerships

By **Joerg Hartmann**

Joerg Hartmann *works for BASF in Germany and has been involved in the company's sustainability reporting and cross-sector partnership work in the framework of the Global Compact. He is a member of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) stakeholder council and is also a part-time lecturer in business ethics.*

The quest for *the* sound business case for sustainable development (SD) is high on the agenda of the private sector. During recent years we have learned that SD does not just involve enlightened people who happen to work for companies, it is also about economic success. But although common ground has been reached there is still a need to develop plausible and convincing concepts for business sector involvement in SD - beyond occasional synergies between doing good and cause related marketing.

Among the frequently mentioned 'business cases' is a company's 'licence to operate'. Based on this concept while at the same time looking at the developing practice of corporate sustainability reporting and cross-sector partnerships, one could also suggest that there is another business case: a company's 'licence to *co-operate*''[1].

Though similar in some respects to the 'licence to operate' this idea might be a more appropriate one for integrating important elements of business thinking. Indeed it can be argued that the major challenge globalisation confronts companies with is how to maintain their ability to co-operate in an increasingly complex environment[2]. In the age of globalisation with its fast and vast structural changes, a company's ability to co-operate with all sorts of stakeholders is crucial. Without constantly investing in the ability to co-operate it is probable that the company will miss emerging opportunities. At the same time it appears to be unlikely that the company can compete at a global level.

'Global competitiveness depends on the ability to co-operate globally, and the ability to co-operate on a global level depends on the ability to compete on a global level. Only those who are competitive are potent partners for co-operation, and only those who are able to co-operate can reach the level of global competitiveness'[3]

The interconnection between global competitiveness and the ability to co-operate is valid for all companies facing competition from other parts of the world. There seems to be a business case to invest in the ability to co-operate – whether or not a company is committed to SD.

Both reporting and cross-sector partnerships can be understood as investments in the ability and the licence to co-operate. They are means to build trust with relevant stakeholders and indicate a readiness to deal with stakeholders' concerns.

There are synergies to be observed between reporting activities and the involvement in partnerships. John Elkington, for example, argues that the trend towards serious reporting practice has helped to establish partnerships between business and even some of its most sceptical stakeholders:

'The reporting activities of recent years have done a great deal to prepare the way for some of the new strategic partnerships now beginning to form between far-sighted companies and pragmatic campaigning groups'[4]

Yet it is not just about alliances with 'pragmatic campaigning groups' but also about wider societal co-operation. For example, in its Social Responsibility Reports the German-based chemical group BASF clearly states that SD communication and partnership involvement are meant to increase opportunities to act and shape the environment they operate in:

'It is equally true that society can support or hamper BASF's success. Shaping social and political processes is therefore both a duty and a key corporate interest. And because we want to do this actively, you have a right to know where we stand and what we understand by social responsibility'[5]

'As a politically active company that assumes responsibility and aims to contribute toward Sustainable Development worldwide, BASF is increasingly turning to new partnerships. By cooperating in networks that include a wide variety of stakeholders, we can overcome the traditional and often entrenched social and political constraints and achieve a new scope of action [...] The focus of our reporting is once again those people that have links with BASF: shareholders, customers, suppliers, partners, neighbours, persons in positions of responsibility from politics and authorities'[6]

A similar opinion is expressed in the 'benefits of reporting' section of the GRI guidelines:

'Companies increasingly emphasise the importance of relationships with external parties, ranging from consumers to investors to community groups, as key to their business success. Transparency and open dialogue about performance, priorities, and future sustainability plans helps to strengthen these partnerships and to build trust.'[7]

Understanding both sustainability reporting and involvement in partnerships as investments in the 'licence to co-operate' does not imply that there are no other relevant business cases. These include the material outcomes of partnerships related to the actual content and outcome of the respective project e.g. better water supply due to an infrastructure partnership. It has also been said that both reporting and partnerships promote innovation and organizational change.

However, elaborating the 'licence to co-operate' seems to be a promising way to get more of the private sector involved – especially if this concept can help to supplement (or even substitute) the 'licence to operate'. The reason for this is that the notion of the 'licence to co-operate' fits much better in the context of the market place. The need for co-operation appears to be somehow more natural and self-explanatory to the business community. The concept basically says: "You will be successful if others want to co-operate with you because they know you from your reports and from successful collaborative projects".

The notion of the 'licence to operate' is, on the other hand, a defensive one. It implies an arena similar to a court of law. In this context reporting and partnerships play a role similar to that of providing evidence to the judges in order to convince them not to withdraw the business licence of the accused: "If you cannot present good reports or partners who stand up as witnesses taking your side, we will revoke your licence and close down your plants." It's a rhetorical question to ask which arena most business people feel more comfortable with – no one likes being accused in a court of law!

Nevertheless, if we want SD to succeed we will probably need both the market place and the court of law. And we will have to translate these scenarios into convincing 'business case' concepts. To date, many have understood that they might have to defend their 'licence to operate' but there is now also the promise of exploring the possible benefits of their 'licence to co-operate', founded among other things on transparent reporting and sound partnership engagement.

NOTES

[1] *The term 'license to co-operate' has been used by Ingo Schoenheit of the German research institute and consultancy, imug, in presentations since 2001. However, as explained to the author in a personal conversation in February 2003, he has not yet elaborated on the underlying ideas in a publication.*

[2] *Wieland, J (1999) Die Ethik der Governance, Marburg, Metropolis, 37-43; Hartmann, J (2002) Soziale Verantwortung und unternehmerisches Handeln, in: Wieland, J and Conradi, W (eds.) Corporate Citizenship: Gesellschaftliches Engagement – unternehmerischer Nutzen, Marburg, Metropolis, pp. 217-225 -pp218-219.*

[3] *Wieland (ibid) p13: 'Globale Wettbewerbsfähigkeit setzt (...) globale Kooperationsfähigkeit voraus und globale Kooperationsfähigkeit setzt globale Wettbewerbsfähigkeit voraus. Nur wer wettbewerbsfähig ist, ist ein potenter Kooperationspartner, nur wer kooperationsfähig ist, erreicht das Niveau weltweiter Konkurrenzfähigkeit', translation by J.H.*

[4] *Elkington, J (1999, 2nd edition) Cannibals with Forks: The Triple Bottom Line of 21st Century Business, Oxford, Capstone p167.*

[5] *BASF (2001) Social Responsibility 2000: We take our Responsibility seriously, BASF, Ludwigshafen, p5.*

[6] *BASF (2002) Social Responsibility 2001: Values create Value, BASF, Ludwigshafen , p5.*

[7] *Global Reporting Initiative (2002) Sustainability Reporting Guidelines, Boston/ Amsterdam, GRI, available at www.globalreporting.org, p4.*

Partnership as Governance Reform: Negotiated Rule-Making in the New Economy

By **Kishan Khoday**

Dr. Kishan Khoday *leads Sustainable Development and Strategic Partnership initiatives for UNDP in Indonesia. His work focuses on the role of the UN in mediating tensions over natural resource use between multinational corporations, indigenous communities and state actors.*

The emergence of partnerships

There are those that say "partnerships" between government, business and civil society offer one of our greatest hopes for meeting the global challenges of the 21st century. But why? Standard explanations offer the efficiency, synergy and cost-effectiveness benefits.[1] This research explores a bolder interpretation - that partnerships have emerged to manage conflicts between the mandates of public agencies, the interests of business and the values of civil society groups in defining the rules and boundaries of the new global economy. Five drivers of change are identified.[2]

- Market failures: lack of information to evaluate globally produced goods and services and inadequate reflection of externality costs imposed on local communities.
- Distributive inequities: rising income disparities; partnerships as a way of redistributing benefits and facilitating policy changes.
- Collective values: growing sense of common humanity as a practical force for social change for issues of environment, human rights, labour, etc.[3]
- Social exclusion: social disadvantage and lack of access to decision-making are driving communities to rebel against globalisation and development.[4]
- Complex change and strategic planning: common vision and coordination of activities to bring to bear the benefits of globalisation.

According to Coase's social cost theory, in moving to address these concerns, businesses, communities and the government bargain to create a solution, but the transaction costs prevent effective negotiations from occurring.[5] A standard option has been to enact state backed regulatory frameworks to avoid such costs.[6]

Partnership as negotiated rule-making

The formulation of rules to manage these challenges is currently mandated to technical state agencies, non-elected representatives delegated power to enact a 'rule of law for the industrial state'. However, progressive erosion of civic trust in this process has led to a crisis of legitimacy in the current form of governance at national and global levels.[7] The partnership approach is directed as a means of governance reform - a corrective measure whereby a negotiated rule-making comes about as a middle ground between collective bargaining and standard state regulation.

Agencies suffer from the criticism that they lack accountability to and legitimacy from civil society - that they are too easily subject to well-organized interest groups and that they are complicit in an 'axis of evil' with transnational business and political factions leading to the major conflicts in our world today. A further criticism is that agency decision-makers are not elected and thus are not directly accountable. Even with elected officials mandated for oversight, many point to the failures in this process.

Withdrawal to the private community of a partnership is set in opposition to this through the assertion of limitation on government decision-making power and the partial dissolution of the agency role in social and economic affairs. Government and business stand as equal partners along-side civic groups. Even where partnerships work within an administrative apparatus, they do so on the condition that state deficiencies are corrected by the partnership arrangement. The partnership does what the government cannot do on its own.

Partnerships are relationships that evolve into new forms of institutionalised, rule-based frameworks - social compacts for the new economy.[8] These new forms of governance create 'de facto rule of law environments' to set the bounds of globalisation. The rules emerging from these processes can become formalized into standard regulatory frameworks. However, most are "being developed and overseen by a diverse configuration of social relations".[9] While the latter are maintained through partnership processes that may not carry the weight and coercive force of formalized regulatory frameworks, this form of rule-making takes communities beyond current state deficits.

Civil proponents of change see partnerships as an alternative constituted in opposition to formal state-led rule-making. Popular justice, and partnerships in this view, is set against an exclusive realm from which it is different.[10] Formal regulations focus on pre-determined types of behaviour separated from any particularised social or cultural context. Popular justice "takes identity in positive contrast to this" and focuses on very contextualised approaches to rule-making and development with heavier reliance on the knowledge and customs of local cultures.[11]

Partnerships with strong community participation are set up as alternatives to the formal state process. They "profess greater responsibility on individuals and communities" - a self-reliance often in opposition to assumptions of state regulation. The hope is more authentic rules with communities providing "an infinite source of standards and legitimisation invoked and given effect by and within the operation of social justice".[12]

Conclusion

Globalisation is more than a mere consequence of expanding global market forces. It is also a process of social, political and cultural change.[13] Following the influence of expanded trade during the 1980's and the end of the Cold War by 1990, partnerships were engaged to meet calls for social justice in developing countries. By 2000, the partnership approach became firmly embedded in the UN Millennium Development Goals and the UN Global Compact, and in 2002 the World Summit on Sustainable Development ratified partnership as a key modality for operationalising international development in the 21st century.[14]

The partnership modality is directed at the challenge of setting the rules of development and preventing conflicts surrounding contentious policy choices. In effect, partnerships can be seen as one element of the continued evolution of the state system, now closely entwined with the post-Cold War process of globalisation and good governance.[15]

The innovation of checks and balances between government, civil society and business match the benefits of agency expertise for technical policies and the corrective features of partnerships - transparency for the role of business, effective participation by excluded groups and better definition of the public interest. By imbuing the state with the partnership approach, effectively transforming it from 'state as government' to 'state as government, civil society and business', the local rules and boundaries of the new economy are being formulated with a renewed popular element.

Future research should assess options for consolidating local compacts among government, society and business that are imbued with very contextualised approaches to rule-making and development. This should target the knowledge and customs of local cultures and governance systems and meaningful access to information, participation and justice in the rule-making process.

NOTES

[1] *Tennyson, R & Wilde L (2000) The Guiding Hand – Brokering partnerships for sustainable development, Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum and UN Staff College, New York. (p.12).*

[2] *Breyer et al (1992, 4th Edition) Administrative Law and Regulatory Policy, Aspen Law & Business, New York, (pp.5-13).*

[3] *Epp, C (1998) The Rights Revolution, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, (p.35).*

[4] *Figueiredo, J & de Haan, A (1998) Social exclusion: an ILO perspective. ILO International Institute for Labor Studies, Geneva, (pp.6-11).*

[5] *Breyer (supra) p7.*

[6] *See Peach D, et al (1985, 2nd Edition) The Practice of Industrial Relations, McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, Toronto.*

[7] *See Gallup International and Environics International (2002) Voice of the People: Trust in Institutions. Environics International, Toronto.*

[8] *Zadek S. et al (Eds.) (2001) Perspectives on the New Economy of Corporate Citizenship, Copenhagen Centre, Copenhagen, (p.24).*

[9] *Zadek (ibid)p26.*

[10] *Fitzpatrick P. (1992) The Mythology of Modern Law, Routledge Press, New York, (p.169).*

[11] *Fitzpatrick (ibid) p173.*

[12] *Fitzpatrick (ibid) p177.*

[13] *Gray J (2002) False Dawn – The Delusions of Global Capitalism, Granta Books, London, (p.87).*

[14] *See Executive Office of the UN Secretary General (2001) The Global Compact - Corporate Leadership in the World Economy, United Nations, New York; and Bennett J (2001) Conflict Prevention, Office of the Global Compact, United Nations, New York.*

[15] *See Shaw, M (2002) Theory of the Global State – Globality as Unfinished Revolution, Cambridge University Press. London; and Saul, J.R. (1995) The Unconscious Civilization, House of Anansi Press Limited. Toronto.*

A Global Partnership with a Mining Multinational: Exploring and Realising the Capacity for Strategic Biodiversity Conservation

By **Jonathan Stacey**

Jonathan Stacey *manages BirdLife International's "Birds and Environment" partnership with Rio Tinto. He is an ecologist who has previously worked with environment and conservation agencies in Southern Africa as well as in the Scottish Highlands with Scottish Natural Heritage.*

This Project assesses the capacity for a strategic biodiversity partnership between Rio Tinto, a multinational mining company and BirdLife International, a global network of environmental non-governmental organisations. A key product of the project is a provisional matrix (see below) which offers a strategic framework to identify and rate existing and potential partnerships across the Rio Tinto - BirdLife Partner network.

In 2001 Rio Tinto and BirdLife International signed a five-year agreement to work together in partnership. The global BirdLife network overlaid with the geographic extent of the Rio Tinto Group suggested high potential for collaboration with strategic capacity at an operational level. The main question posed by the project was: to what extent can this partnership meet the strategic biodiversity objectives[1] underpinning BirdLife's *raison d'être*, while assisting Rio Tinto to meet its operational and reputational objectives?

BirdLife's and Rio Tinto's objectives have been advanced to reflect mutual benefit with specific joint programme objectives. These aim to:

- Improve knowledge and interest in birds throughout Rio Tinto's operations.
- Improve habitats for birds at Rio Tinto sites.
- Assist and advise Rio Tinto about local and regional conservation issues and priority setting.
- Identify opportunities with Rio Tinto for effective mitigation of biodiversity impacts at sites through wider conservation initiatives.
- Create opportunities to link with local communities on integrated conservation and management of biodiversity.
- Gain long-term support for

BirdLife's Global and Regional Important Bird Area (IBA) Programmes.

- Promote and develop stewardship roles for practical action at IBAs and for threatened species.

- Develop strategic initiatives for sustainable development with targeted benefits for birds and biodiversity.

- Maximise Rio Tinto's local and global position on biodiversity issues. These should assist Rio Tinto in becoming a positive force for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development, achieving practical results on the ground within the countries that it operates.

Furthermore, the experience that both partners gain can be extended widely by:

- assisting the conservation sector in effectively engaging with mining issues, either through partnership or in terms of addressing impacts of development.

- demonstrating to the mining and other corporate sectors how a strategic partnership with an NGO can help deliver both operational and reputational benefits.

The core activities of the Rio Tinto - BirdLife Programme set out to achieve considerable institutional integration, mindful of a mine planning and operational culture that thinks in terms of 40 - 60 year cycles, sitting alongside an appreciation that biodiversity conservation invariably requires long-term commitment. Such an approach requires that both partners understand structures within the partner organisations as well as their respective cultures.

The concept of a matrix to assess the partnership is an experimental one, seeking to give broad indications of where the Programme needs to concentrate its time and funding resources. Capacity scorings can be expressed in terms of political openness/availability to partnership, existing organisational/infrastructural capacity, while taking into account the presence and capacity of external institutions (such as appropriate strategic government agencies). Corporate or political prejudice will result in a lower capacity rating, despite other aspects being well-developed. Biodiversity scorings will reflect the presence of Endangered, Threatened or near-Threatened species, habitats, the relative proximity and relevance (to site operation) of one or more Important Bird Areas, and also the presence of an Endemic Bird Area or species. This rating should also take into account the presence of other Protected Areas that reflect biodiversity importance for birds and other taxa.

To achieve the transition to sustainable development both partners need to establish their common interests and forge a strategy for effective delivery of the biodiversity imperatives within their respective environmental bottom-lines. In delivering the biodiversity element to the triple-bottom line, a partnership can only achieve effectiveness if informed by good science, allowing it to focus effort and resources on priorities. The strategic matrix has the capacity to inform where Rio Tinto and BirdLife network should be concentrating their efforts to make a real difference. Areas of low or suppressed capacity need to be addressed, using all the skills of partnership brokering that can be mustered. The model emerging out of this project and the partnership that forms its basis could be systematically adapted to other global corporate biodiversity-oriented partnerships. The Rio Tinto-BirdLife International Programme is endeavouring to implement an approach that is responsive to opportunity and informed by priority.

NOTES

[1] *The partnership was considered in the context of sustainable development but it is vital that the biodiversity components of sustainability are well understood in spite of the fact that this is often difficult, given the inherent 'wildness' and complexity of biodiversity.*

RIO TINTO - BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP MATRIX

		CAPACITY RATINGS			
	BirdLife Partner	Rio Tinto	BirdLife	External Institutions	CR Total
AUSTRALASIA AND INDONESIA					
Northparkes (NSW)	Birds Australia	2	3	2	**7**
Coal and Allied - Hunter River (NSW)	"	2	2	2	**6**
Peak - Cobar (NSW)	"	1	2	1	**4**
Pacific Coal - Tarong (Qnslnd)	"	1	2	2	**5**
Pacific Coal - Moura (Qnslnd)	"	1	2	2	**5**
Pacific Coal - Kestrel (Qnslnd)	"	1	2	2	**5**
Pacific Coal - Blair Athol (Qnslnd)	"	2	2	2	**6**
Comalco - Weipa (Qnslnd)	"	2	3	2	**7**
Comalco - Boyne Island (Qnslnd)	"	2	2	2	**6**
Comalco - Queensland Alumina	"	1	2	2	**5**
Comalco - Bell Bay (Tasmania)	"	2	3	3	**8**
Comalco - Tiwai Point (SI - NZ)	Forest and Bird	2	3	3	**8**
ERA Ranger/Jabiluka (NT)	Birds Australia	3	3	3	**9**
Argyle Diamonds (WA)	"	3	2	2	**7**
Dampier Salt - Lake MacLeod (WA)	"	3	3	2	**8**
Dampier Salt - Dampier/Karratha (WA)	"	3	3	2	**8**
Dampier Salt - Port Hedland (WA)	"	2	3	2	**7**
Hamersley Iron Mines (WA)	"	2	2	2	**6**
Robe - West Angeles (WA)	"	2	2	2	**6**
HI Smelt - Kwinana (WA)	"	2	2	3	**7**
Lihir Gold (PNG)	NGO Unidentified	2	0	1	**3**
PT Freeport - Grasberg (Irian Jaya)	BirdLife Indonesia	2	1	1	**4**
PT Kelian - E. Kalimantan	BirdLife Indonesia	2	2	1	**5**
PT Kaltim Prima - E. Kalimantan	BirdLife Indonesia	2	2	1	**5**
MADAGASCAR					
QMM	BirdLife in Madagascar	3	2	2	**7**
AFRICA					
Richards Bay Minerals (KZN)	BirdLife South Africa	3	3	3	**9**
Palabora Mining Company (Limpopo)	"	3	2	3	**8**
Rio Tinto Zimbabwe (Patchway)	BirdLife Zimbabwe	2	2	1	**5**
Rio Tinto Zimbabwe (Eiffel Flats)	"	2	2	1	**5**
Rio Tinto Zimbabwe (Renco)	"	2	2	1	**5**
Rossing Uranium (Namibia)	No Partner	3	0	3	**6**
SOUTH AMERICA					
Rio Tinto Brasil - Paracatu	BirdLife in Brazil	2	1	2	**5**
Rio Tinto Brasil - Corumba	"	2	1	2	**5**
Rio Tinto Brasil - Fortaleza	"	2	1	1	**4**
Transbarge Navegacion (Paraguay)	Guyra	2	2	1	**5**
Rio Tinto Borax -Tincalayu (Argentina)	Aves Argentina	2	2	1	**5**
Escondida (Chile)	UNORCH	2	1	2	**5**
NORTH AMERICA					
IOC (Labrador City) (Canada)	CNF - UQCN	2	2	2	**6**
IOC (Sept-Iles) (Quebec, Canada)	"	2	2	2	**6**
QIT Fer-et-Titane (Sorel-Tracy; Quebec)	"	3	2	3	**8**
QIT Fer-et-Titane (Havre St. Pierre; Quebec)	"	1	2	1	**4**
Diavik Diamonds (NWT)	CNF - Ecology North	3	1	2	**6**
KMC - Ridgeway (South Carolina)	Audubon S. Carolina/ NAS	2	3	2	**7**
KMC - Greens Creek (Alaska)	Audubon Alaska/NAS	2	2	2	**6**
Kennecott Energy - Colowyo (CO)	Colorado Audubon/NAS	3	3	3	**9**
KE - Powder River Basin	Wyoming Audubon/NAS	3	3	3	**9**
Kennecott Utah Copper (Utah)	Utah Audubon/NAS	3	3	3	**9**
Rio Tinto Borax (California)	California Audubon/NAS	1	3	3	**7**
Luzenac America (Colorado)	Colorado Audubon/NAS	3	3	3	**9**
Luzenac America (Montana)	Montana Audubon/NAS	3	3	3	**9**
Luzenac America (Vermont)	Vermont Audubon/NAS	1	2	3	**6**
Resolution/ Kennecott Exploration (Arizona)	Arizona Audubon/NAS	3	2	3	**8**
EUROPE					
Anglesey Aluminium (Wales, UK)	RSPB	1	1	3	**5**
Rio Tinto Borax (Surrey, UK)	RSPB	2	1	3	**6**
Luzenac Europe (Austria)	BirdLife Osterreich	2	3	2	**7**
Zinkgruvan (Sweden)	SOF	1	2	3	**6**
ASIA					
Rio Tinto Exploration - India	BNHS - IBCN	2	3	2	**7**

RATINGS

Institutional Capacity: High 3; Medium 2; Low 1; None 0; Unknown U

Biodiversity Capacity: High 3; Medium 2; Low 1; None 0; Unknown U; Not yet identified N + reasonable estimate rating

BIODIVERSITY RATINGS						TOTAL RATING
Threatened Species	Endemic Bird Area	IBA	Other Protected Area	Biome/Habitat Importance	BR Total	
2	3	N2	2	3	**12**	**19**
3	3	N3	3	3	**15**	**21**
2	1	N2	0	3	**8**	**12**
3	3	N2	2	3	**13**	**18**
1	1	N2	N2	2	**8**	**13**
2	1	N2	0	2	**7**	**12**
1	1	N2	0	2	**6**	**12**
1	3	N3	1	3	**11**	**18**
3	1	N3	1	2	**10**	**16**
3	1	N3	1	2	**10**	**15**
3	2	N2	N2	N2	**11**	**19**
U	0	N2	N2	N2	**6**	**14**
1	2	N3	3	3	**12**	**21**
3	2	N2	2	3	**12**	**19**
1	0	N3	2	3	**9**	**17**
1	0	N3	1	2	**7**	**15**
1	0	N3	1	2	**7**	**14**
1	0	N2	3	3	**9**	**15**
1	0	N2	2	3	**8**	**14**
2	3	N2	0	1	**8**	**15**
U	2	N2	0	3	**7**	**10**
2	3	N3	3	3	**14**	**18**
3	2	N2	0	3	**10**	**15**
3	1	N3	3	3	**13**	**18**
2	3	3	2	3	**13**	**20**
3	2	3	3	3	**14**	**23**
2	1	3	3	3	**12**	**20**
1	0	0	0	2	**3**	**8**
1	0	1	1	2	**5**	**10**
1	0	0	1	2	**4**	**9**
2	1	3	3	3	**12**	**18**
1	1	1	0	3	**6**	**11**
3	0	N3	2	3	**11**	**16**
3	1	1	1	3	**9**	**13**
2	0	N3	1	2	**8**	**13**
3	3	N3	N2	3	**14**	**19**
3	3	N3	N2	3	**14**	**19**
0	0	0	0	3	**3**	**9**
0	0	3	3	3	**9**	**15**
0	0	3	3	3	**9**	**17**
0	0	3	3	3	**9**	**13**
2	0	2	0	3	**7**	**13**
0	0	N2	2	2	**6**	**13**
2	0	N3	3	3	**11**	**17**
1	0	3	2	2	**8**	**17**
2	0	2	2	3	**9**	**18**
2	0	3	2	3	**10**	**19**
2	3	N2	2	3	**12**	**19**
2	0	3	1	1	**7**	**16**
1	0	N2	3	3	**9**	**18**
1	0	N2	0	1	**4**	**10**
1	0	N3	2	3	**9**	**17**
0	0	2	3	1	**6**	**11**
0	0	3	3	1	**7**	**13**
0	0	1	N2	1	**4**	**11**
0	0	2	2	2	**6**	**12**
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The Purist's Partnership: Debunking the Terminology of Partnerships[1]

By **Ken Caplan**

THIS PAPER LOOKS AT THE CURRENT RHETORIC SURROUNDING PARTNERSHIPS. GIVEN THAT PARTNERSHIP LANGUAGE FRAMES EXPECTATIONS, BEING HONEST ABOUT THE CHALLENGES OF MULTI-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS IS THE ONLY WAY TO ENSURE THAT PARTNERSHIPS ARE USED MOST EFFECTIVELY.

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In corporate, public sector and NGO literature, the term partnership is used to describe many different kinds of relationships. The lines are often blurred between the vast spectrum of sponsorship to contracts to arrangements based on mutual need. Given the current confusion around public-private partnerships in the provision of public services, whereby contracts, rather than any deeper interrelationship, define the terms by which the public sector and private sector engage, a crusade of sorts is needed to force a greater rigour and accuracy on the use of the term "partnership". Though still very early days in the formation of multi-sector partnerships, expectations (and rhetoric) run high while the reality lags well behind.

Public pronouncements about partnership from officials of all sectors repeatedly refer to phrases such as trust, common vision, and voluntary commitment. Although literature *on partnerships* has redressed many of these issues, the literature *of partners* often promotes that partnership (given the undeniably positive connotation of the word itself) is by its very nature a harmonious undertaking. These concepts are misleading at best and at worst do not actually apply to cross-sector partnerships at all.

This paper tries to set the record straight. Correcting our language around partnerships is not merely an academic or pedantic exercise but rather of the utmost necessity, particularly as the use of the term partnership reaches near pandemic proportions. Terminology frames our expectations and expectations are usually the source of frustrations. A lack of intellectual honesty also provides enormous channels for sceptics rightfully to undermine some very successful partnership work in a variety of fields.

While partnerships hold enormous promise, they are not the panacea to sustainable development as some contend. Rather if the foundations are solid and our expectations realistic about how challenging they are, they are a serious tool in the toolbox. Tools though may only be needed to build the project. Partnerships in and of themselves need not be sustainable; it is the activities or projects that organisations undertake together in partnership that hopefully will be.

The Vision Thing

Cross-sector partnerships are by their very nature unnatural relationships. They bring together very disparate groups (public, private, donor and civil society) to work jointly on a project. It is often suggested that a common vision, mission, goal or overarching objective is necessary to forge a team spirit and create common understanding that will henceforth provide the basis for an overarching framework between partners.

Coming from the side of the purist (or perhaps, more accurately, the sceptic), such glorious harmony is unreachable and in fact counterproductive. It is unreachable because the points of reference for different sectors are different. This suggests that a common understanding of terms like "sustainability" is unlikely. For example, in many development projects, sustainability for the private sector has some relationship to cost recovery, for NGOs it has a bearing on empowerment and community voice, and for the public sector it generally means technically sound and thus not needing to be addressed again in the future. These are not mutually exclusive concepts but they are significantly different starting points.

Whilst the efforts to get there might be revealing, common vision in this broad sense usually masks the individual aspirations of each participating organisation and/or be so watered down as to be fairly useless in the name of facilitating group identity and purpose. The ultimate end is that no one owns the mission statement since the meaning enshrined therein is too general and the attempts to combine everyone's interest too negotiated. Striving for a partnership mission statement also exacerbates the tension for the individuals involved in representing the partnership to their own institutions and their own institution to the partnership.

Challenging enough to formulate, a common understanding of the "project" is absolutely critical (i.e. 400 water taps installed in a community, the building of a health care centre, etc.). Processes to reach clarity around expectations and risks for each individual and organisation engaging in the partnership (and hence the project) is far more critical than common vision.

Core Complementary Competencies

Some suggest that cross-sector partnerships are based on the concept of Core Complementary Competencies. The premise is that organisations should stick to what is most integral to their operations (their Core Business), contribute what they do best (their Key Competencies), and determine which of these core competencies appropriately add value to what each of the other participating organisations are contributing (Complementary Contribution). This concept is absolutely critical to understanding who should do what, however, the practice is rarely so straightforward.

Organisations that come together in this way in reality often compete for what they want to contribute. As examples, while an NGO might have community outreach skills and local knowledge, a company also builds up these competencies through their customer care and the public sector through their local mandate. While the public sector suggests that they are ultimately responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the project, NGOs often serve in a watchdog (i.e. monitoring) capacity, and companies monitor and evaluate as a matter of refining business plans and practice. "Clear divisions of labour" mask the competition from which both individuals and institutions enter into partnership relationships.

Similarly an emphasis on Core Complementary Competencies fails to recognise the inherent disregard for what partner organisations might do better. Companies often are least willing to acknowledge the competencies of their partners, most likely to sub-contract in the skills that are needed, and thus most likely to undermine the innovation that can be brought to bear by bringing the different partners together. NGOs are often unwilling to narrow down their "core business" for fear of missing out on opportunities. And sadly, the public sector is rarely given much credit for attempting to manage or oversee the holistic picture for which governments are responsible (education, environment, health, transportation, water, and so on).

Trust vs. Respect

In much of the literature, "trust" looms large in defining what is needed to build solid partnerships. Refuting this concept is much like refuting a universal truth; many people question how can you have a partnership in which partners do not trust each other? Firstly, distinctions need to be made between trust between individuals and trust between institutions. Would Mr. Y from Anyold Company and Ms. B from Thisorthat NGO trust each other after several years of working together? Perhaps. More likely however, they have built up mutual respect for what each organisation and each individual can offer to the project and hence the partnership. When Mr. Y leaves the company, does Anyold Company trust Thisorthat NGO? Probably not. Relationships start over (sometimes from the beginning, sometimes from even before the beginning reviewing the entire foundations) when new individuals come in, hence the literature rightfully also emphasises the importance of institutionalisation and buy-in in some form or another.

Some caveats may apply. In cases where there is an option to choose your partner, this may allow the opportunity to emphasise trust. (More often than not however, the choices are limited - there might be one company, one NGO working in a specific community, and certainly only one municipality in that area.) In relations directly with the community, whether with local officials, an NGO, or a company, trust must be fostered. (This relationship, often the purview of NGOs, is different largely as a function of the expectations of the community.)

Perhaps more useful efforts can be placed on ensuring that there is an understanding and hence respect for what partner organisations can deliver and the obstacles that they face in either partnering in the first place or delivering what they said they would deliver. Individuals may or may not trust each other. Perhaps they trust their partners to behave in a certain way, rather than that they will trust their partners to always put the partnership first. The distinction is an important one, again given how we frame our expectations of our partners.

Similarly, successful partnerships are expected to reflect a certain chemistry between the individuals involved. Again, this would certainly seem appropriate as a guiding principle for partnerships where partners have the luxury to choose one another. Perhaps chemistry though is over-rated in situations where there is no choice as to with whom you must partner. Relationships may bloom quicker and partnerships produce results or impacts more effectively if the individuals sitting around the table like each other. Sometimes, though, this might be too much to wish for and partners just need to find mechanisms to get on with the business of negotiating, implementing and reviewing their work together.

Voluntary vs. Obligatory

We often hear that partnerships are voluntary - that no one is forcing an organisation to join in a partnership. The term voluntary has a few different (albeit related) meanings. It can mean "willingly" or "optional". Dissecting these meanings in relation to partnership presents some challenges:

- *Willingly* - Willingly suggests a certain passive and painless contribution with very little need for compromise. British Airways collecting coins from passengers to pass on to charity is a painless way of making everyone feel good about putting in money to "make a difference". Perhaps this is a partnership, but it is not nearly so complicated or threatening as others.

- *Optional* - Given the challenges that such relationships face, the hard work that they require, and the commitments that must be forthcoming, if cross-sector partnerships were optional, very few organisations would engage in them.

The purist's partnership must be based on mutual need that relates to some limitation on the part of that organisation to meet their core business interests. Core business can be defined in many ways though including unwritten "contracts" with shareholders, communities, the electorate, or otherwise. A social license to operate is critical for many companies and protecting it certainly represents a core business interest.

"Voluntary" fails to capture either the critical nature of the contribution, the urgency that brought the partners together in the first place, the impact that my organisation's absence in the project might have on our activities in the future, or the challenges that these types of relationships pose. In another light, the term voluntary might relate to the initial decision by a specific individual to engage, but once that decision has been taken, there is an obligation to fulfil commitments and walking away is not without costs (be they in monetary terms, reputation, or otherwise).

Outputs vs. Outcomes

Indeed partnerships can enhance outputs. It might take longer but through a partnership more water points can be installed in a community. However, partnerships are not the only mechanism for installing more water points. Donors could fund the company or an NGO to put in more water points, the company could make a "social investment" to install more taps, or the communities could save money to install taps themselves. For any number of reasons though, one, two or three years down the line, these taps may no longer be functioning. The presumption is that partnerships lead to more sustainable "projects" or outputs - bringing synergies together in order to innovate for the long-term.

Outputs are tangibles that we can see – a report, the number of times an advocacy message is repeated on the television or radio, the number of children vaccinated, etc. We tend to stop after we have counted all the outputs of the partnership (which in fact may have been completed as suggested above by other means even quicker).

Partnership projects, by the sheer virtue of bringing together so many different forms of contributions, should place equal emphasis on the outcomes. Outcomes are the less tangible results - how many children can now attend school because they are not walking for 4 miles a day for water; how policies have been changed in a company or legislation amended as a result of findings documented in a report; how behaviour has changed as a result of hearing a message repeatedly; or estimates of how much money has been saved in curative care as a result of vaccinations being given to children.

In cross-sector partnerships, failing to focus openly and clearly on the expected outcomes for each partner organisation is where the disappointment and the crossed expectations become most prevalent. The question becomes "what is the partnership really trying to achieve?" rather than what is it trying to produce. Determining the outcomes also helps to define who is better placed to deliver or lead on specific project components. Usually the negotiations around outcomes present greatest cause for compromise, (which presumably is where greatest impacts on organisational behaviour occur).

Contracts are often to blame for the emphasis on outputs or deliverables. Contracts ultimately dictate the terms of the project and hence the terms of the interaction between the partners. They often also explicitly reveal some issues around balance of power - particularly when one partner is providing the funding. In such cases, can we describe these relationships as partnerships in the purist sense? Perhaps the nature of the dialogue that occurred to produce the contract would suggest whether the relationship was based on an equal footing. Perhaps how frequently the document is reviewed to ensure that it still meets the needs of all partners, or reflects the actual interaction of the partners in implementing the project, must be taken into consideration. The challenge is to find documents and mechanisms that bind organisations together in partnership but still allow for flexibility in the evolution of that relationship.

The Purist's Partnership

So what is the purist's partnership? The purist's partnership must be something that is fundamentally based on, recognises and incorporates aspirations and expectations of each individual involved and each partner organisation. Although this seems obvious, too often partnerships couch the project in negotiated middle ground that forms an ineffectual, unobjectionable "mutual goal." Mutual agreement is fine for defining the project, or the outputs, but must recognise that the expected outcomes will probably be different for different partner organisations.

Partnerships must be based on need – some end result that could not be achieved by one organisation on its own. Furthermore, the outputs and outcomes have to be critical to the way each organisation operates or its core business, regardless of the kind of organisation – public, private or civil society. The most effective partnerships would thereby be tied with no uncertainty to the core business, or core interests, of each organisation that comes to the table. This pertains equally to the communities or beneficiaries - the partnership project has to be a priority for them too. Put more crudely, if a "business" case for each partner (more broadly than in strict financial terms) cannot be made convincingly, then forget it.

Whilst the tone of this paper may be overly critical, the rhetoric surrounding partnerships requires that we take another look – that we are honest about the challenges that cross-sectoral partnerships face. Cross-sector partnerships hold enormous promise, but only if we start from an honest assessment of what they are, how they function, and what we should expect from them. Otherwise they will very quickly erode into an exercise in tokenism or rebranding and one day in the near future fall out of fashion.

Taken from a trigger paper produced for Year 1 participants. Now expanded into an article for the BPD Practitioner Note Series http://www.bpd-waterandsanitation.org

NOTES

[1] *Debunking is colloquial for "exposing something as false."*

Cross-Sector Partnership Initiative

THE CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE (CSPI) BUILDS ON THE EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE OF THREE PARTNER ORGANISATIONS; THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE PROGRAMME FOR INDUSTRY, THE COPENHAGEN CENTRE AND THE PRINCE OF WALES INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS LEADERS FORUM – ALL OF WHICH ARE NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS WITH EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES THAT BRING TOGETHER TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS, PUBLIC SECTOR INSTITUTIONS, CIVIL SOCIETY AND ACADEMIA.

Activities

The approach of the three partner organisations is a highly practical one based on experiential learning, action research and inter-disciplinary thinking. Through the CSPI they are able to develop a wide range of activities which build upon their partnership expertise and capacity-building work as separate institutions.

CSPI activities include:

Post-graduate Certificate in Cross-Sector Partnership (PCCP)

The Postgraduate Certificate in Cross-Sector Partnership (PCCP), which was launched in March 2002, lies at the heart of CSPI activities.

The first year of this University of Cambridge accredited programme has now finished, and the participants, contributors, tutors and course team are unanimous in the opinion that the year has been an outstanding success.

34 participants, representing a broad range of sectors and hailing from 21 different countries, attended two challenging, intensive and innovative residential study periods in Cambridge. In the six months between residential sessions, the participants were supported through a process of reflection, as well as continued debate and engagement as they worked to apply the learning to their own organisations and professional practice.

The first cohort of participants has now graduated from the course with a broad and deep understanding of the key issues and challenges facing cross-sector partnerships as well as practical tools, skills and techniques to help them to meet these in practice. They are also leaving the course with new insights into their work, an invaluable set of contacts and a strong alumni network to support them in their future endeavours.

A review of the first year of this programme can be viewed at: http://www.cpi.cam.ac.uk/pccp/review.pdf.

The second year of the programme (beginning March 2003) has attracted another strong and diverse participant group and promises to be an equally interesting and exciting year.

Regional connections/regional partnership courses

CSPI is keen to support the development of regional training initiatives, particularly when undertaken by those who have completed the PCCP, and wherever possible offers advice and guidance on content, structure and design.

CSPI will also be developing a number of regional events with international organisations from different sectors and inter-governmental agencies to develop, market and deliver programmes for specified target regions.

Customised courses

CSPI is able to offer partnership development programmes designed to meet specific organisations/institutional challenges. These include introductory courses to raise awareness of the value of partnership approach as well as more in-depth work covering the process of partnership building; capacity-building and skills training for those in the front-line of making partnerships work more effectively.

Research

The CSPI partners have undertaken to complete a range of research projects, not only to expand the existing body of research on cross-sector partnerships, and promote CSPI's profile in this area, but also to underpin other initiatives within the CSPI portfolio, and to inform CSPI's priorities for investment and development.

Advisory Group

A number of influential organisations and companies form an Advisory Group that gives feedback to the programme partners and thereby ensures that the initiative remains 'cutting edge' in its approach. They are:

- Care International
- Rio Tinto
- Shell International
- Thames Water
- UNDP

For more information on CSPI, or any of these activities, please contact:

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The Cross-Sector Partnership Initiative (CSPI)

CSPI IS A COLLABORATION BETWEEN THREE PARTNER ORGANISATIONS:

University of Cambridge Programme for Industry

- Gateway organisation to the academic resources of the University of Cambridge Programme for Industry
- Expertise in learning process design and delivery
- Credit-awarding institution and guarantor of academic quality

The Copenhagen Centre

- Leading European knowledge centre for new social partnerships
- Innovation in action learning about partnership development
- Promoting the role of government in partnerships for social inclusion

The Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum

- Global leadership in the field of responsible business practice
- Innovation in engaging business as partners in development
- Promoting the enabling environment in which partnerships flourish

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PARTNERSHIP MATTERS

CURRENT ISSUES IN CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION

THIS IS THE FIRST EDITION OF PARTNERSHIP MATTERS, AN ANNUAL PUBLICATION THAT EXAMINES CURRENT THINKING AND PRACTICE RELATED IN CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS. THE JOURNAL DRAWS ON ORIGINAL LEARNING MATERIAL FROM THE CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE (CSPI) DEVELOPED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE'S PROGRAMME FOR INDUSTRY, THE COPENHAGEN CENTRE AND THE PRINCE OF WALES INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS LEADERS FORUM AND SEEKS TO OFFER NEW INSIGHTS INTO CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION WHILE ALSO SERVING AS A VALUABLE LEARNING TOOL FOR THOSE WORKING IN THIS RAPIDLY DEVELOPING FIELD.

The Copenhagen Centre