

PARTNERING



STEP BY STEP

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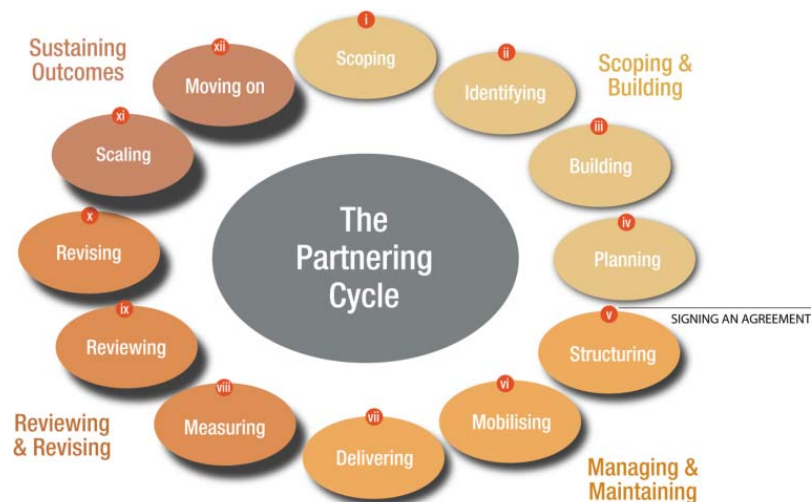
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Introduction

Partnering Step by Step is a response to demand from people working in many parts of the world on local-level partnerships for sustainable development. There are many papers, case studies and tool books¹ that offer a global dimension on partnering and these have played their part in promoting greater rigour and standards in partnership as a valuable development paradigm. However, local groups need something more 'fit for purpose' that they can explore, share and apply at the grass roots – this is the aim of the tool book.

Based on a simple 'partnering cycle' (see below), we walk through a typical partnering journey 'step by step'.



Each section covers one stage in the cycle and suggests the **characteristics** typical of this stage and the **activities** that are appropriate. In addition, at each stage there is a simple partnering **tool** that practitioners may find useful as well as a **tip** that will help that stage be completed successfully. To illustrate these things in practice, we also follow the story of one local partnership through each of the different stages.

STORY

Cilganipur – background to a fictionalised case study based in the agriculture sector in rural Bangladesh.²

In Cilganipur district, the small farmers were facing a number of challenges including: managing livestock disease; the need for training in new agricultural technologies; working with unreliable electricity and variable quality of seed and fertiliser supplies. The farmers are heavily reliant on local government to provide essential information but they feel that the understanding at district level about the day-to-day realities they face in the field is very poor. The small farmers are members of local Shamities (small farmers associations).

The local government office was beginning to look for better ways to provide the technical assistance to the thousands of farmers in their jurisdiction. Limitations in manpower and financial resources have restricted their ability to deliver at the necessary speed and scale. Additionally, this office has responsibility for disaster relief and managing local elections. Such an unmanageable workload has had a very negative impact on productivity.

¹ Many of which have been produced by The Partnering Initiative itself and are available on our website.

² This story is drawn on a number of real partnerships but all details have been changed and some episodes have been invented. The authors would like to thank all those involved in providing elements of this case study.

Meanwhile, a business man who is an influential representative of the main bazaar in the district capital of Salantet, has been working to bring together local business people with a common interest in the effective production and sale of food, livestock and other crops. This group has grown to include shop owners, storage and transportation providers, seed and livestock producers and Shamity leaders and is known as the Cilganipur Business Membership Organisation (CBMO).

At early CBMO meetings, it became clear to all those involved that if they could to work more collaboratively with government and the farmers, all parties were more likely to get their needs met. They started working together on a few initiatives, but it soon became apparent that effective collaboration required more co-ordination and organisation and they started to consider developing a public-private partnership (PPP) as a method for managing the process and scaling up the impacts and influence of their collaboration.

This scenario has many of the elements typical of partnerships at a local level and we hope that being able to track this story throughout the tool book will help to make the partnering process more real.

The focus of this tool book is entirely on the operational aspects of partnering. By 'partnering' we mean the delivery of co-created and co-managed initiatives with an emphasis on building local self-reliance and sustainability. It aims to help create a common language and approach to partnering as well as encourage a focus on good partnering behaviour.

Our experience suggests that good partnerships are based on three core principles: **Equity** (where everyone's contribution is valued and respected); **Transparency** (where partners deal with each other in an open and honest manner) and **Mutual Benefit** (where it is legitimate for all partners to expect a 'return' for their own organisation / sector from being partners).

It is also our belief that even the smallest local partnership plays its own part in contributing to the global partnership movement by:

- Creating greater local self-reliance and home grown solutions to challenges
- Promoting more sustainable development initiatives
- Having long-term impact on institutions and organisations in each sector
- Building a more stable and less fragmented society.

What we provide here are some simple suggestions and guidelines about the partnering process. Partnerships are always unique to their own setting and those involved will always need to find their own solutions to the challenges they face – but we hope this publication will give a level of confidence to those partnering for the first time.

We firmly believe that partnering for development is vitally important to the sustainability of our planet and wish you well in all your partnering endeavours.

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1. Scoping

The idea of creating a sustainable development partnership can come from any sector whether government, business or not-for-profit. Some partnerships are born at the 'grass roots' level and others are 'top down' but whatever the specific situation, the initial energy for a partnership originates from one organisation or sector. We call this the **initiating organisation** since even when it is an individual who takes a lead, that individual is almost always operating in the name of an organisation.


Partnering is not a quick fix or easy option so it is important to be sure that there is not an obvious non-partnering way to address the presenting issue or challenge. Be systematic in exploring other options – there is no value in partnering for the sake of partnering.

Activities

- Identify in broad terms the issue(s) or challenge(s) to be addressed
- Consider any available non-partnering alternatives that may be adopted to tackle the issue. If a partnering approach seems the only or the best way forward, build a clear rationale to persuade others
- Have some initial ideas about the range and types of projects that the partnership may undertake to use as a basis for discussion with potential partners
- Consider the possible contributions of different sectors – based on their likely interests and motivations

TOOL	Drivers for partnering from the perspective of each sector		
	Government	Business	Not for profit
	Being responsive to local need Delivery effectiveness & reach Cost effectiveness Search for innovative solutions Implementing regulations Improving good governance Building constituency support	Market development Product development Licence to operate Risk mitigation Reputation gain Competitive differentiation Demonstrating social responsibility	Achieving development goals Wider stakeholder engagement Greater reach and impact Resource leverage Improving transparency Reducing aid dependence Building community self-reliance

CASE STUDY	Cilganipur – Scoping phase
	<p>During the scoping phase, questions were raised about what it would mean to become partners (rather than an informal group). The Shamity leaders, while keen to work with the others, were very cautious about losing their independence and worried that their members (local farmers) would not support such a move.</p> <p>In addition, several members of the group were unhappy at the idea of the local government representatives becoming partners since they were all frustrated and angry with what they saw as the failure of local government to fulfil their obligations by addressing the challenges the farmers and businesses faced.</p>

	<p>Tip: Use this early scoping phase to build the case for partnering but do not be too fixed in your ideas – simply use your initial ideas as a basis for further conversations and engagement.</p>
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2. Identifying


There are many ways to identify appropriate partners. One option is to call an open meeting for a large number of key organisations from all sectors to brainstorm the issues; explore the idea of a collaborative approach or to simply make contact with as many potential partners as possible. Another option is to select the most likely partners and meet up with them one-by-one to present the idea and engage their interest.

Activities

- Find examples and evidence of where a partnering approach has worked effectively in similar circumstances to share with your potential partners
- Seek out a wide range of possible partner organisations
- Make initial contact with potential partner organisations – on a ‘no commitment’ basis – to explore the idea
- Draw up a list of preferred partners and check out their suitability in more detail – and don’t forget to let them check out your organisation’s suitability also. This should be a two-way process.

TOOL	Potential Partner Check List	
	Characteristics / partnering capacity (actual or potential):	Score: 1 = low
A good reputation and track record in their sector? With other sectors?	1 2 3 4 5	
Skills, competencies and / or other useful resource contributions?	1 2 3 4 5	
Sound management and governance structures?	1 2 3 4 5	
Good communications channels and access to networks / information?	1 2 3 4 5	
Good financial management track record?	1 2 3 4 5	
Willingness to innovate and learn from experience?	1 2 3 4 5	
Interest in and willingness to collaborate	1 2 3 4 5	
Sticking power when things get tough?	1 2 3 4 5	

STORY	Cilganipur – Identifying phase
	<p>Driven forward by the business person who had initially drawn the group together, it was agreed by the other business people and the Shamity representatives to hold initial talks with representatives of the local government. They decided to involve two members of the group (one from business and one from the Shamity) at each one of the local government meetings to demonstrate their willingness to collaborate.</p> <p>After a series of meetings – some quite difficult and unproductive – two individuals were identified within the local government who seemed receptive to the idea of a partnership and who had high enough positions to be able speak for the local government once the partnership got under way.</p> <p>At the same time the Shamity leaders held a series of local meetings with their membership to ensure the farmers understood the purpose of the proposed partnership and were willing to support it. As part of this process, the Shamity leaders invited 4 of the business people from the group to meet with the farmers to discuss common challenges and begin to explore if / how they would be able to work together.</p>

	<p>Tip: It is important to keep your options on who will be partners open for as long as possible in order to be sure the choices are sound. Many organisations may be inexperienced in partnering and may take time to adopt the idea and to be confident and capable of partnering well.</p>
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3. Building

Once partners have been identified, it is a good idea to invest some quality time in deepening understanding between the different partners and building the partner relationships – both between the key individuals and between the cultures of the organisations involved. Time spent on this at an early stage will reap rewards later on and make the future partnership more robust when it faces challenges. It is common to find entrenched assumptions (in oneself as well as in others!) towards people and organisations in different sectors. It is vitally important to get beneath this and to build genuine engagement and insight into the drivers, priorities and values of each of the partner organisations and people involved.

Activities

- Create opportunities for getting to know more about each of the organisations (site visits, presentations)
- Explain the key principles for partnering (see page X) to partners and ensure they understand their implications and agree to abide by them
- Co-create and record an agreed definition of what the partners mean by the term 'partnership'
- Co-create some 'ground rules' to support considerate behaviour between the partners

TOOL

Types of ground rule for building successful partner relationships³

- Rules for interacting with other partners (*behaviour*)
- Rules for communicating internally and externally (*shared responsibility*)
- Rules for managing logistics (being efficient and effective)
- Rules making decisions (building collective responsibility)

Note: It is a good idea to keep the ground rules as few in number and as simple as possible whilst ensuring they fulfil their desired intent. If there are too many or they are too complex, partners will not remember them well enough to abide by them!

STORY

Cilganipur – What does equity mean in practice?

The group – now comprising 7 Shamity leaders, the CBMO president and secretary, the local Agriculture Officer and his District Director – met for 3 days at a workshop in a final pre-partnership phase to determine what they wanted to achieve and how they could work together to achieve shared goals. During this workshop, a presentation of the partnership's aims, and commitments needed to be made to a wider audience.

Everyone assumed a government official would perform this role. But, recognising the need to build equity between partners and recognising the talent around the table, the government official suggested that a Shamity leader represent the group instead. The Shamity leader humbly replied that he did not feel best equipped to do this. The official replied 'We are all equal partners around this table with something to contribute and we each have a duty to contribute. It is as important for me to step back as it is for you to step forward'.

The Shamity leader rose to the challenge impressively and delivered a clear, precise and engaging summary of the partnership's plans. This proved to be an important first step in building genuine equity in the partnership.



Tip: Demonstrate good partnering behaviour yourself by being a good listener, being genuinely interested in all the partners and adhering to principles of collaborative decision-making

³ Adapted from the Partnership Brokers Accreditation Scheme

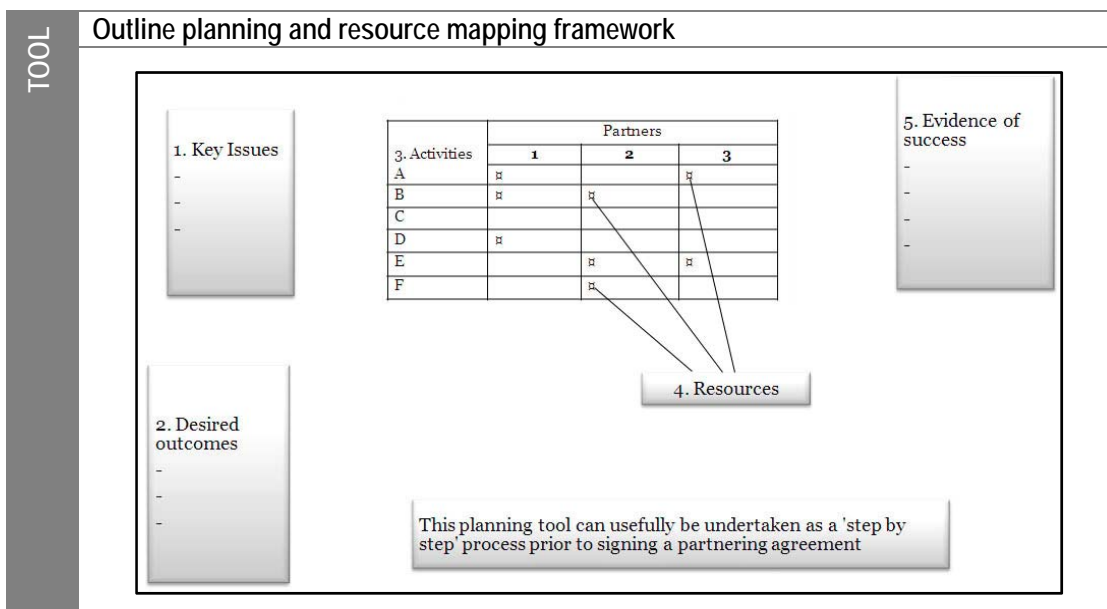
4. Planning

This is the most critical step in the pre-agreement phase – and perhaps it is surprising that we suggest doing so much planning prior to signing an agreement. Experience suggests that the strongest partnerships are those that work through most aspects of a plan – albeit in outline – to make sure that the right partners are involved and expectations are clear and acceptable.

The most important aspect of this phase is to urge the partners to give the time to working through each aspect of planning (see Tool X below) and to address issues of controversy or divergence as fully as possible to bring about resolution and consensus. This involves some ‘give and take’ from all partners – where achieving the goal becomes more important than simply satisfying single partner interests (although, of course, those are also important).

Activities

- Move the partners from a broad agreement about the key issue(s) to be addressed by the partnership to more precise definition of focus areas, actual projects and specific goals – this process will reveal potential partners who are not at the table
- Agree as a group what the hoped-for outcomes from the partnership's activities are and how the achievement of these outcomes will be measured and assessed
- Undertake a brainstorm to explore the range of specific activities and projects that should be developed to achieve the hoped-for outcomes – being realistic as well as ambitious, always bearing in mind the constraints the partnership may face in implementing its plans
- Undertake a resource mapping exercise to assess what resources are needed and what each of the partners is able and willing to contribute – understanding the term ‘resources’ to cover knowledge & expertise, competencies, equipment, products, networks & relationships, influence, labour as well as cash. Building such a resource map is an excellent way to build equity in the partnership because it offers the opportunity for every partner organisation to contribute from their areas of strength.



4. Planning ctd.

STORY

Cilganipur – Using the Outline Planning Tool

Prior to signing an agreement, the prospective partners spent some time working together to plan the various elements of their proposed programme of work. Using the planning tool as a framework for their discussions – and taking it step by step – they were able to reach agreement on each piece and summarise their decisions in a large version of the tool on the wall where they were working.



Being able to see their decisions recorded in this way was an encouragement to making further decisions. It was also a very useful way of exploring which partner would be able to contribute what and whether each partner was really prepared to make tangible commitments. Equally importantly – the visual record of matching activities to resources was a useful way of revealing resource gaps and raising the question as to whether other potential partners should be approached.

This outline planning process was completed over one day – so it was an efficient use of time and those involved were surprised and pleased at how much progress they had made. It was this that gave them the confidence to move quickly into a discussion and decisions about the structure and contents of a partnering agreement – which till this point, they had been reluctant to consider.

The end of this phase of the partnering cycle is concluded, typically, by those involved confirming the partnership with some form of **partnering agreement**. The agreement can record the shared vision, a partnership definition, principles and ground rules underpinning the collaboration, individual partner as well as shared objectives, resource commitments and obligations as well as provisions for more formal review and grievance procedures. This is important because it will form the basis of the partnership as it moves into project implementation mode.



Tip: There are many possible types of agreement from the completely informal (handshake or verbal promise) to the ultra-formal (multi-page contracts assigning detailed obligations to each partner). Most successful partnering agreements are built as a collaborative process with all the partners deciding together exactly what needs to go into the document, how it should be monitored and how often it should be reviewed. If necessary, sub-agreements or contracts can be drawn up at a later stage to cover specific transactions under the broader ‘umbrella’ agreement.

5. Structuring

Once an agreement is signed it is time to put in place the infrastructure to develop and deliver the agreed programme of work. It is not uncommon for partnerships to struggle at this point since it is invariably a challenge to move from planning to managing mode. The aim is to create a delivery mechanism that will be efficient without losing the active engagement of the all partners that has been established so carefully in Phase 1.

Activities


- Ensure the partnership is not over-reliant on just a few individuals representing their organisation and that it is more embedded in each partner organisation.
- Agree which types of decision can be taken by individuals on behalf of the partnership and which must be agreed in advance with all partners.
- Build systems through which partners can be accountable to each other (in addition to their accountability within their own organisations) and address any actual or potential conflicts of interest. Partners need to feel increasingly confident that they can rely on each other.
- Maintain regular communications between partners and between the partnership and other stakeholders. All communication needs to be informative but not too burdensome and to be designed appropriately for each purpose and audience.

TOOL	Communications Options		
	Purposes	Mechanisms	Audiences
	Engaging interest	Face-to-face conversations	Partner representatives
	Confirming agreements	Presentations	Partner organisations
	Recording commitments	Workshops	Partner networks
	Record of meetings	Story-telling	Project staff
	Information sharing	Written minutes / notes	Project beneficiaries
	Project descriptions	Email	Officials
	Tracking the history	Phone calls	Wider public
	Capturing the story	Video / audio / photographs	Other partnership practitioners
	Other?	Other?	Other?

STORY The Cilganipur Partnership - Keeping people informed

In order to communicate to those outside of the partnership about what the partnership was trying to achieve, the partners needed to come to agreement about the partnership's goals and how they wanted to communicate these to others. Partners decided to create a poster that would easily illustrate the partnership's vision and values. The process of agreeing the partnership's identity was as important as the final poster, providing greater clarity and unity between partners.



	<p>Tip: Share communication tasks between all the partners – this will consolidate their commitment and build their sense of being responsible for representing the partnership to others.</p>
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6. Mobilising

Sometimes it turns out that a partner, in their enthusiasm for the partnership, has over-promised what their organisation can offer. They may need help in activating their promise and persuading their organisation that the contribution is appropriate and will lead to organisational benefits. Sometimes a partner has under-promised and as the project work develops, that organisation is able to offer more or new contributions.

Partners now need to actually deliver what they have committed to delivering at an earlier stage. Whatever resource contributions they have offered now need to be brought into the partnership as and when the time is right. It is important to value all resource contributions (intangible as well as tangible) so the partner that contributes knowledge and information feels their contribution is as valuable as the partner that contributes equipment, people or cash.

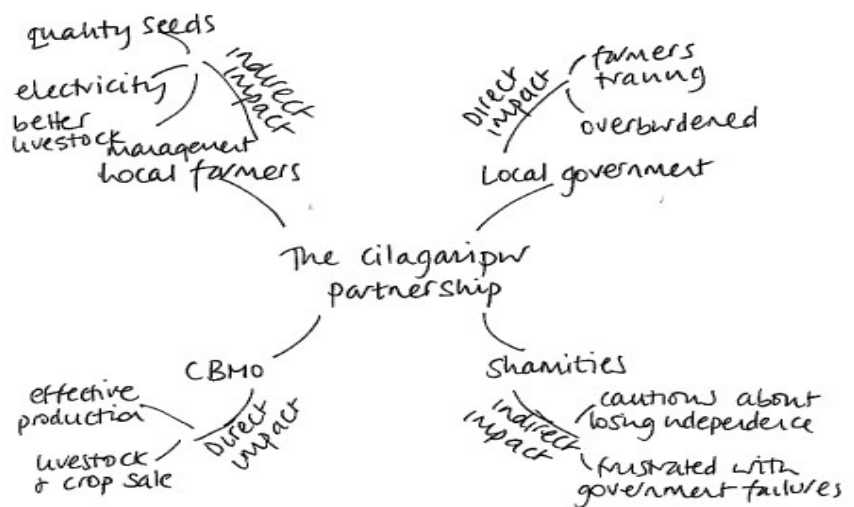
Activities

- Confirm in writing exactly what resources have been pledged and when they will be delivered including the time commitment of each partner representative
- Support partners in honouring their commitments – helping them persuade their organisations to fulfil their commitments where necessary
- Set up a system for recording contributions and the uses to which those contributions have been put so that partners can clearly see how their contribution is being used and report back to their colleagues and managers
- Widen the engagement of other stakeholders – including those that may be able to make further resource contributions as and when needed

TOOL

Building a stakeholder map

Working with the partners as a group – have a free-ranging discussion about who the wider stakeholder group may be and why they are important either as groups that may be impacted by the partnership or that may impact the partnership directly or indirectly. The discussion can be recorded as a kind of 'map'.

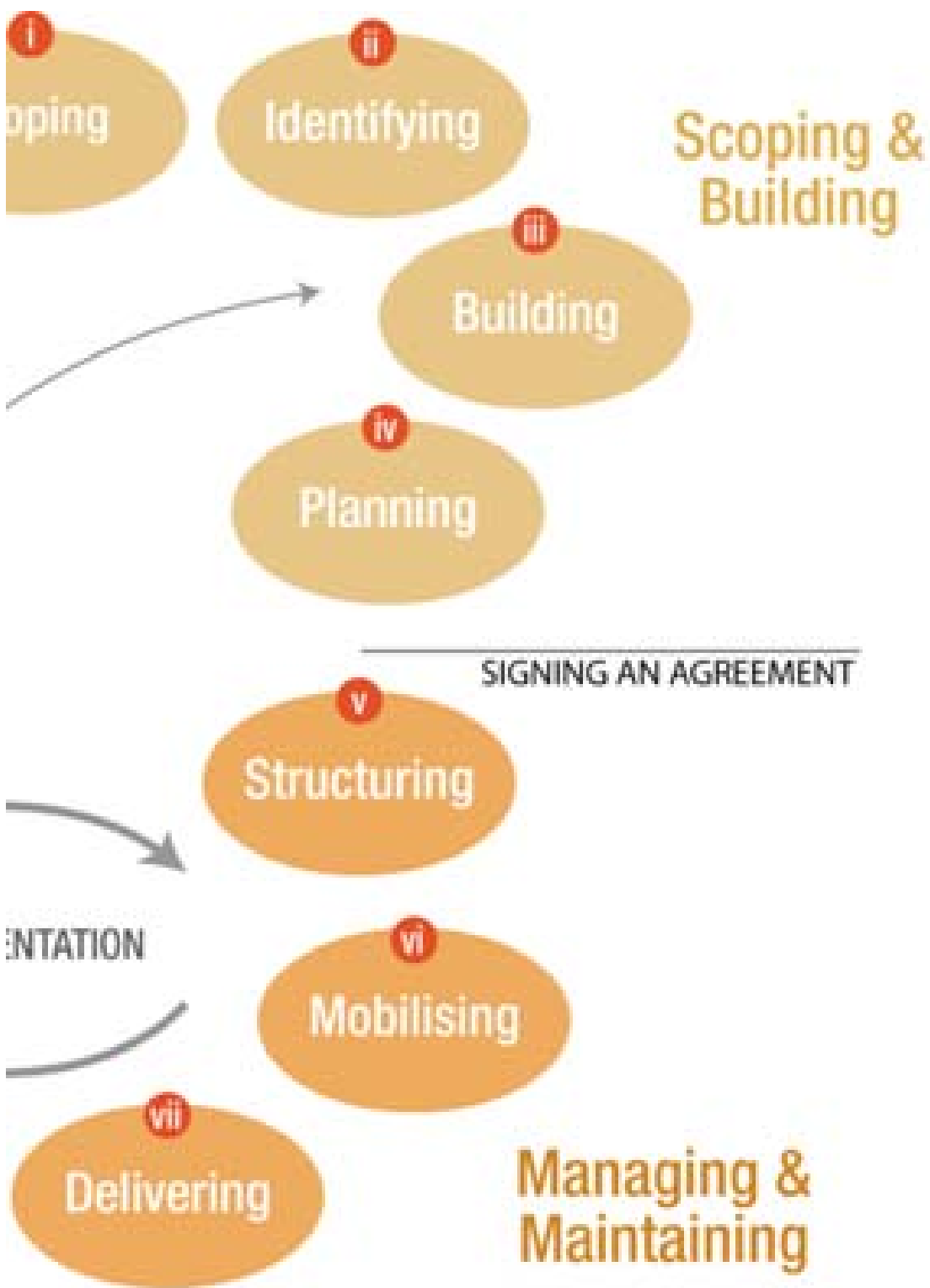


Once the 'map' has been completed, agree which stakeholders are the responsibility of individual partners and which of the partnership. Then consider how and when to engage with each stakeholder group in turn.



Tip: here can be a lot to do in a partnership and it is important for partners to prioritise, but stakeholders can be very important to the success and impact of a partnership. Don't feel you have to reach every stakeholder immediately but do beware of the partnership becoming too insular and exclusive.





7. Delivering

The delivery stage in a partnership is itself a continuing cycle of activity – sometimes lasting years! In many ways it is similar to any type of project delivery cycle and some partners will find this stage easy and familiar since they have delivered development projects before. It is important to remember, however, that for some partners this will be a new experience and for all partners, delivering as a partnership will pose additional challenges.


It is important to be practical and precise in what projects are being undertaken and who will do what by when. But be realistic – projects often take longer to deliver than expected. Use a project management tool to ensure people fulfil their commitments since one person failing to deliver work within an agreed timescale can have serious ‘knock on’ effects on other activities and the partnership’s achievements and impacts.

Activities

- Allocate clearly (and fairly) roles and responsibilities for project delivery
- Track activities and fulfilment of agreed commitment and timetable
- Celebrate project successes with all those involved to maintain enthusiasm and engagement
- Continue to keep partners and other agreed stakeholders informed of progress

TOOL	Project management			
	Projects	Project activities	Lead responsibility	Delivery timescale
Description of Project 1	–	Named individual	Start and completion dates	
	–	Named individual	Start and completion dates	
	–	Named individual	Start and completion dates	
	–	Named individual	Start and completion dates	
Description of Project 2 etc.				

STORY	The Cilganipur Partnership – Managing Meetings
	<p>Following on from a public ceremony to celebrate the signing of the Partnering Agreement, the partnership progressed well and projects were agreed. Because everyone was busy with implementing projects the partners met far less frequently. One of the partners became concerned about this and called a meeting at short notice. This individual created an agenda without consultation. When the other partners arrived and saw the agenda for the first time, they were upset that things they wanted to discuss were not listed. Suddenly they felt like ‘2nd class partners’ and this put them in a defensive mood, making negotiations that morning more difficult and progress slow.</p> <p>To make things worse, the nominated chair for the meeting did not ensure that all partners had an opportunity to speak. One result of this was that an important piece of information (about an incidence of water pollution that was undermining the success of one project) was not brought to people’s attention. All this had a negative effect on people’s enthusiasm for the partnership and raised questions for them about whether the partnership would be able to solve the problems as they had all hoped it would.</p>

	<p>Tip: Remember that in addition to internal challenges, partnership projects are likely to be impacted by changes in the context in which they are operating – like changes in the local economic / political landscape or by completely external phenomena like extreme weather conditions. A good partnership is one that is flexible enough to adapt to external changes and partners should be encouraged to see such changes (whether good or bad) as opportunities for the partnership to move in new directions.</p>
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8. Measuring

It is tempting when a partnership is going well and the partner relationships seem to be generally satisfactory to avoid asking some of the harder questions: Is the partnership productive? Is everyone pulling their weight? Is it achieving targets and goals? All these questions are critical – and ultimately are the questions that each partner organisation will want to have answered to justify their involvement.



It is important for partners to understand the need for measurement and to engage with any measurement processes whole-heartedly.

Where things are not working as well as they might, it is essential for the partners themselves to come to this realisation and take their share of responsibility. Simply laying blame on someone else or external factors is not good enough – and will have the effect of de-stabilising the partnership.

Activities

- Agree / confirm success indicators with partner organisations – *were the original ones correct, should new ones be added?*
- Monitor compliance – are partners doing what they promised within the agreed timescale?
- Put in place arrangements for reviewing the project – *what changes to implementation are necessary?*
- Keep track of deliverables, outputs and impact – *are the activities achieving targets and goals?*

TOOLS	Who needs to know what?		
	What needs to be measured?	How will this be done, by whom and by when?	Who needs to know?

STORY	The Cilganipur Partnership - Measuring
	<p>The Cilganipur Partnership met to agree what should be measured as way of assessing the impact of the partnership. They decided to measure increases in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CBMO sales of livestock and seeds • Number of farmers accessing electricity • Yield form each harvest • Number of farmers involved in the project (every 3 months) <p>They also agreed to 'track' the number of other Shamities that made enquiries about the partnership and to ask them to record the increases in efficiency and productivity over time.</p>

	<p>Tip: Don't be afraid of measurement – it does not have to be 'rocket science' and it can play a major and positive role in reinforcing the value of the partnership both to the partners and to other stakeholders.</p>
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9. Reviewing

In a partnership it is useful to distinguish between measuring the projects outputs and impacts and reviewing the added value and effectiveness of the partnership. It is tempting to give the project priority during Phase 2 of the partnering cycle and to lose sight of the partnership aspects. In a healthy partnership, reviews will be a regular feature and will be used as a basis for confirming the value of the partnership to the different partners (ie whether or not it meets their underlying interests) as well as checking out whether the partnership is operating efficiently.

Activities

Use a regular review process to:

- Take stock of the efficiency and effectiveness of the partnership – in terms of management and development – and agree any changes necessary to procedures and / or communications
- Help partners to assess the value of the partnership to their own organisations and constituencies
- Record any unexpected benefits or outcomes (eg wider influence) from the partnership
- Consider whether there are new opportunities for the partnership, where it might go next and what might need to change to enable these next steps to be taken

TOOL

Reviewing the partnership

Partnership reviews can be undertaken in a number of ways but we strongly recommend that they are approached in a highly participative manner since no one can know better than the partners themselves whether or not the partnership is valuable and working well. A review should usefully include:

- Separate review sessions within each partner organisation where each:
 - Undertakes some form of 'SWOT'⁴ analysis
 - Explores any unexpected (positive or negative) outcomes from the partnership
 - Agrees a set of priorities for the partnership going forwards
- A pulling together of findings from each partner's review work
- A joint session where the findings are shared, discussed and acted upon

STORY

The Cilganipur Partnership - Benefits from the partnership

After 3 harvests, the partners decided to revisit their original reasons for getting involved to see whether their hopes for the partnership had been achieved. They enlisted an external person to help with this who interviewed each partner separately and then facilitated a dialogue between all partners. They discovered that although their original needs had only been partially met, there had been several other unexpected benefits.

One benefit was that the partnership had managed to set up an easy way of using SMS messaging to communicate about poor quality seeds after the first harvest - enabling farmers to check with the Shamity network before purchasing seeds and to report on batches of seed that were of poor quality. This provided greater choice for the farmer and forced a large amount of poor quality seed off the market. A local seed distributor whose stock consistently received poor results was compelled to invest in getting his seed tested using the government's testing laboratory that was located nearby. A significantly better quality seed was on the market in time for the following harvest.



Tip: It may be valuable to appoint someone who is less directly involved in the partnership to act as a 'facilitator' of a review process – this is not to take away from the partners overall control of the review process but rather to help the partners to interpret, internalise and act on the review findings.

⁴ A useful framework for a discussion on the partnership's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

10. Revising

Any review is likely to give rise to suggestions for changes in the partnership. These can range from small but important procedures to more drastic changes (for example, deciding to radically restructure the partnership). This can be a challenging process and may be felt by some partners as an implicit criticism of what has gone before. But change may simply to put in place what is needed now which is inevitably different to what has been needed in the past.

Activities

- Agree as a group what needs to be changed
- Agree a timetable and change management process – allocating tasks between the partners
- Make the agreed changes (which could include dropping some partners and bringing in new ones)
- Re-define the partnership and re-write the partnering agreement if necessary

TOOL	Communicating change		
	Changes in the partnership may impact many people and organisations and should be communicated well and sensitively. There are a number of options (see Tool X – Communications Options) and the important thing is to <u>anticipate</u> who should be informed and at what stage of the change process.		
	AGREED CHANGE	WHO NEEDS TO KNOW?	AT WHAT STAGE?
	Change number 1	• within partner organisations	
		• project staff and beneficiaries	
		• other stakeholders	
		• wider public	
	Change number 2 etc.		

STORY	The Cilganipur Partnership – Revising the partnering arrangements
	<p>One decision from their review after the 3rd harvest was that the role of Chair of the partnership meetings should rotate between all the partners. It was also decided that the Chair should have an assistant to help with administrative duties and that this would be a good training opportunity for a young person from one the partner organisations.</p> <p>The partners agreed to meet more regularly (every 2 months) but that there would be interim meetings for small groups of partners to discuss topics that were not of concern to everybody.</p> <p>The interim meetings would be reported on at the bi-monthly meetings of the whole partner group to secure their agreement.</p> <p>The partners now began to explore a new opportunity for improving seed quality by collaborating with the National Institute of Agricultural Research - they agreed to invite this organisation to become a new partner after completing a satisfactory check on their interest in - and capacity to - partner well.</p>



Tip: Change can be resisted but it can also be the life-blood of a dynamic partnership – stopping it from getting stale, enabling it to be responsive to changing circumstances and giving partners the energy they need to move forwards.

11. Scaling

Many partnership initiatives start as 'pilots' – testing out the partnering approach and ensuring that it is a suitable vehicle for delivering the hoped for results. Some partnership projects remain small and fulfill expectations perfectly well. More typically, if a programme is successful partners begin to consider how to scale it up to build greater reach, impact and influence.

Activities

You have a number of options for scaling up. These include:

- Expanding the established projects
- Publicising the projects – using the media or partner networks and communication channels
- Writing up the partnership's story and make it available to others
- Encouraging others to adopt a partnering approach

TOOL	Reaching scale		
	Level 3	Where the partnership is used as a model for new partnerships and / or as a trigger for changing national policies	How will partners use their experience to encourage adoption of new 'rules of the game' by sector leaders and policy makers?
	Level 2	Where the partnership begins to influence key individuals, organisations and systems	How can the partner organisations themselves and others internalise the lessons from the partnership and support the new approaches in their day-to-day functions
	Level 1	Practical projects developed in partnership to address sustainable development challenges	What is needed to scale these up? Is the partnership the best mechanism or should the project be handed over to a mainstream delivery mechanism?



Tip: If your partnership work is proving successful, don't be too modest! It may be that your example will encourage others to try a partnering approach to their own sustainable development challenges.

12. Moving On

At some stage the time will be right for individual partners or the partnership as a whole to move on. If the partners decide to disband the partnership they need to ensure that a long-term delivery mechanism is put in place to sustain the projects or the outcomes of their project work.

Activities

Moving on can involve a number of options. These include:

- Concluding the partnership – with partners free to work with new partners on other projects
- Handing over the current project(s) and continuing to work together as a partnership on new projects
- Establishing the partnership as a new mechanism or 'institution' with its own independent strategy and structure (see tool below for options)

TOOL	Selecting the right long-term delivery mechanism		
	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
	Creating a new unit within one of the partner organisations		
	Supporting the creation of a new public service managed by the local authority		
	Building the capacity of the local authority or existing public service to adopt the project and manage it appropriately		
	Setting up a new free-standing institution / organisation dedicated to continuing the project and / or scaling it up – not necessarily as a partnership		
Other?			



Tip: Don't forget to celebrate what has been achieved and to give acknowledgement where it is due for hard work and persistence – moving on well takes as much careful management as building a new partnership!

PRACTITIONER QUESTIONNAIRE ctd

All good partnership practitioners find time to reflect on their own partnering performance and contribution. Such reflection encourages good partnering behaviour, more thoughtful decision-making as well as deeper understanding of what is / is not working well and why. Involvement in a partnership can – and should – challenge our assumptions about what we do and how we do it and in what ways we relate to those with other perspectives. Working with partners from different sectors can offer unexpected opportunities for learning that things can be done differently and that goals can be achieved in a range of ways.

Every individual has a range of professional skills and the capacity to partner well. But every individual can improve their capacity to partner by thinking more deeply about the partnership and their role within it. It is useful to ask yourself questions with regard to organisational, professional competency and partnership issues. The questions that follow are for you – as an individual practitioner – to reflect on.

A. ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES

1. What are the underlying motivations / drivers for my organisation's interest and involvement in the partnership? How can I help the other partners understand these?
2. Do I have the full backing of my line manager and my colleagues? What do I need to do to convince them to become more actively engaged?
3. How can I help them understand the partnership better and engage with it more fully? How can the other partners support me in this?
4. How do the other partners regard my organisation? How can I help partners to understand my organisation better?

B. PROFESSIONAL COMEPTENCY ISSUES

5. What professional skills & competencies do I have and how are they useful to the partnership?
6. What new skills and competencies do I need to partner effectively? How can I acquire them?
7. How do other partners perceive my skills and competencies? Are their perceptions accurate and are their expectations of me realistic?
8. How much do I really understand about the assumptions, values and drivers of the other sectors represented in the partnership? How can I understand them better / more deeply? .

PRACTITIONER QUESTIONNAIRE

C. PARTNERSHIP ISSUES

9. What is currently working well in the partnership? How can I help to maintain this?

10. What is currently not working well in the partnership? What action(s) can I take to improve this?

11. What potential do I see for the partnership in the future? Do others share my vision? How can I present it and invite others to share theirs?

D. ANY OTHER ISSUES TO EXOPLORE / RECORD

To make contact with other partnership practitioners to learn from their partnering experience and to share your own, you may want to join (at no cost) the on-line, international partnership practitioners network managed by The Partnering Initiative: www.PartnershipForum.org

The following organisations have been involved in creating and funding this publication:



The International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF)... IBLF's global programme, The Partnering Initiative, is playing a leadership role in promoting the art and science of effective cross sector partnership for sustainable development.

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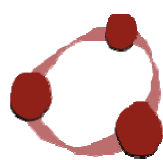
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