



International
Civil Society Centre

Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships

Building Blocks for Success

Acknowledgements

From April to November 2014, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development is conducting an extensive discussion process to develop a 'Zukunftscharta' (Charter of the Future – the Charter) that will guide its strategies for sustainable development. The International Civil Society Centre is contributing to the preparations of one specific aspect of the Charter: multi-stakeholder partnerships. In this context, the Centre has commissioned the Institute for Environmental Studies (IVM) at VU University Amsterdam to write a study on success conditions for multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development. Drafts of this study have been presented and discussed at workshops in London and Berlin.

The full text of the study has been published by the IVM:

Pattberg, Philipp and Oscar Widerberg (2014): *Transnational Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships for Sustainable Development. Building Blocks for Success*. IVM Report, R-14/31. Amsterdam: Institute for Environmental Studies.

For this publication, the International Civil Society Centre has shortened and slightly revised the original full text without interfering with its major findings.

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With support from:



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development are a central element of contemporary sustainability governance, particularly since the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). They have been credited with closing the participation and implementation gap in sustainable development. And they have been accused of privileging private interests and thereby consolidating the privatisation of governance.

This report has surveyed recent scholarship to provide an evidence-based assessment of the performance of multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development. While the overall performance of partnerships is mixed at best, we identify and discuss nine building blocks that increase the likelihood for successful and effective partnerships: leadership, partners, goal-setting, funding, management, monitoring, meta-governance, problem-structure and socio-political context.

Three main conclusions are drawn in this report:

1 Setting up successful partnerships requires sufficient time and resources

Already in the planning and start-up phase, the likelihood for success can be enhanced by investing sufficient time and resources in formulating common goals, ambitions and visions, identifying and attracting the relevant partners and setting up mechanisms for dealing with dispute settlement among the partners. Once these preconditions have been met, the partners must ensure an effective management, allocate adequate resources for process management and devise smart funding structures to ensure a sustained flow of resources. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation are key parts of the procedure to create internal and external legitimacy, showcase successful implementation and identify and learn from mistakes. Throughout the entire process, the partnership must adapt to a changing environmental and social and political context. Consequently, leadership is a central element during the entire partnership process.

2 Design and implementation must take the function of the partnership into account

Function matters to how partnerships should be designed and implemented. By and large, service providing partnerships, such as the GAVI Alliance (GAVI), the Global Polio Eradication Programme (GPEI) and the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP), demand larger financial and human resources and more knowledge about political and social contexts than knowledge transfer and standard setting partnerships (such as the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative, EITI), since the former's implementation on the ground is highly resource intensive. These insights are particularly useful for setting priorities when allocating scarce resources.

3 Effective monitoring and evaluation are essential

Improved political oversight (preferable at the level of the United Nations) is essential to improve the credibility and effectiveness of the entire UN approach to sustainable development. A main conclusion from the evaluation of the WSSD's Type II partnerships has been that the lack of monitoring and reporting mechanisms severely limits partnership effectiveness at an aggregate level. This is not only bad news for the effectiveness and overall performance of multi-stakeholder partnerships but also for the legitimacy and trust-worthiness of the UN brand. Therefore, improved monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are urgently needed and we suggest developing safeguards in the form of minimum criteria, building on some of the nine building blocks. For example, partnerships should be conducive to commonly agreed global norms such as human rights and sustainable development.

INTRODUCTION

Multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development are often portrayed as a vital new element of the emerging system of global sustainability governance. In policy and academic debates alike, partnerships are promoted as a solution to deadlocked intergovernmental negotiations, to ineffective development cooperation and overly bureaucratic international organisations, to self-centred state policies, corrupt elites and many other real or perceived current problems of the sustainability transition. Multi-stakeholder partnerships were promoted in particular at the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), where they emerged as a ‘Type II outcome’ of the summit, along with the traditional ‘Type I outcomes’ of the intergovernmental diplomatic process. While at its peak, more than 340 partnerships for sustainable development have been officially registered with the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), many more are active across the globe but not formally registered. Ten years after the WSSD, the 20th United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) reaffirmed the central role of partnerships. More recently, the preparatory work for a new Post-2015 Development Agenda replacing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has also reiterated the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships to implement sustainable development (UN 2014a).

And yet, the role and relevance of partnerships for sustainable development remains contested. Some observers view the new emphasis on multi-stakeholder or inter-sectoral partnerships – also referred to as public-private – as problematic. Partnerships might privilege more powerful actors, in particular ‘the North’ and ‘big business’, and consolidate the privatisation of governance and dominant neo-liberal modes of globalisation. Others argue that partnerships lack accountability and legitimacy. Yet others see multi-stakeholder partnerships as an innovative form of governance that addresses deficits of inter-state politics by bringing together key actors of civil society, governments and business. In this perspective, partnerships for sustainable development are important mechanisms to help resolve a variety of current governance deficits.

This report summarises existing scholarship on multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development, aiming to identify the building blocks for successful and effective partnerships. To this end, we first briefly describe the rise of partnerships in governance for sustainable development and survey the existing literature to present a partnership typology and elicit the central themes that occupy researchers, including effectiveness and legitimacy. Second, we describe, discuss and prioritise nine building blocks that increase the likelihood of a successful partnership. Third, we wrap up the study with a call to action for designing and implementing successful multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development.

The discussions and the results of the study are based on an extensive literature review (see literature list) and supported by six in-depth case studies including Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI), Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP), the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to reduce short-lived climate pollutants (CCAC) and the German Food Partnership (GFP).

STATE-OF-THE-ART: RESEARCH ON MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS

Definition and typology

In this report, we are focusing on multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development as a form of global governance beyond traditional forms of international, multilateral cooperation. Despite the lack of a broadly agreed definition of this phenomenon, most scholars agree on several features that constitute multi-stakeholder partnerships. Important shared characteristics of partnerships include: transnationality (involving cross-border interactions and non-state relations); public policy objectives (as opposed to public goods or exclusively private goods); and a network structure (coordination by participating actors rather than coordination by a central hierarchy). Following Schäferhoff, Campe and Kaan (2009, 455), we define transnational multi-stakeholder partnerships as “institutionalised transboundary interactions between public and private actors, which aim at the provision of collective goods.” The study thus explicitly excludes national or local-level partnerships as well as project level private-public partnerships (PPPs).

The table below provides an overview of the three dominant functions of partnerships and a useful typology capturing most partnerships. We also use this typology to structure our building blocks discussed in the respective chapter.

Table 2.1: Type of Multi-stakeholder partnership

Type	Description	Examples
Service provision/ implementation	Supporting to implement multilateral agreements and goals; Regulating state or other actors' behaviour	Global Fund
Knowledge transfer	Generate, exchange and spread knowledge and expertise	Global Water Partnership
Standard setting	Establish new rules and norms	World Commission on Dams; Forest Stewardship Council;

A brief history

Transnational multi-stakeholder partnerships entered the international scene during the 1990s as a new and innovative governance tool (compared with traditional intergovernmental cooperation). Today, partnerships exist in almost all global issue areas including environment, health, development cooperation, social rights and security.

We highlight two aspects to explain their popularity. First, during the 1990s, neoliberals claimed that the sole solution to global governance was an unfettered market solving problems with the help of an invisible hand. This idea however, faded with the demise of conservative governments in the UK and the US and could be described as a 'market failure' in solving global problems. Second, there was a general feeling that the process and implementation of multilateral agreements did not have the desired impact. This was interpreted as 'state failure' to address pressing global problems. Since markets and states failed to deliver collective goods, other solutions were needed and flexible, adaptable and decentralised multi-stakeholder partnerships promised an attractive alternative to traditional public policy and often cumbersome interstate negotiations.

The growth of multi-stakeholder partnerships as a governance tool has not been without its critics. A common objection is that they are a neoliberal construction invented to increase the power of private interest in global affairs, in particular in the developing world (Zammit 2003). Some claim that UN-sponsored partnerships are a way to invite special interest into the UN, boost corporatism and allow the private sector to make use of the UN's good name while merely paying lip-service to the goals it sets out. Some developing countries have also been weary of giving partnerships too much attention and accused developed nations of shifting responsibility for funding away from traditional Official Development Assistance (ODA). They emphasise that partnerships should be understood as complementary to ODA, not as a substitute.

Despite the critique, multi-stakeholder partnerships have become an integral part of policy implementation at the UN level. At the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Agenda 21 was adopted. It called for a "Global Partnership for Sustainable Development" and repeatedly alluded to multi-stakeholder partnerships between "public, private and community sectors" in its recommendations on how to implement sustainable development (UNCED 1992). The message from Rio was reiterated ten years later at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. During the WSSD, so called 'Type II' or 'Johannesburg' partnerships emerged as a central delivery mechanism to implement sustainability related goals. In 2012 at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), world leaders again emphasized the central role of partnerships for implementing sustainable development in the outcome document 'The Future We Want', even if some argue that the public-private interactions were given less attention than they deserved (Abbott 2012).

Key findings on the past performance of multi-stakeholder partnerships

Evaluating the performance of partnerships is inherently difficult. Comparative studies are hampered by large differences in function, goals, capacity and membership constellations. Many multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development have vague and diffuse goals and lack appropriate monitoring and reporting mechanisms, making the causality between the output of the partnership and impact on the ground difficult to establish. Notwithstanding the methodological challenges, much of the research on partnerships focuses on two central criteria for evaluation: effectiveness and legitimacy. The next sections briefly discuss the central tenets and results of research on effectiveness and legitimacy of multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development.

Effectiveness

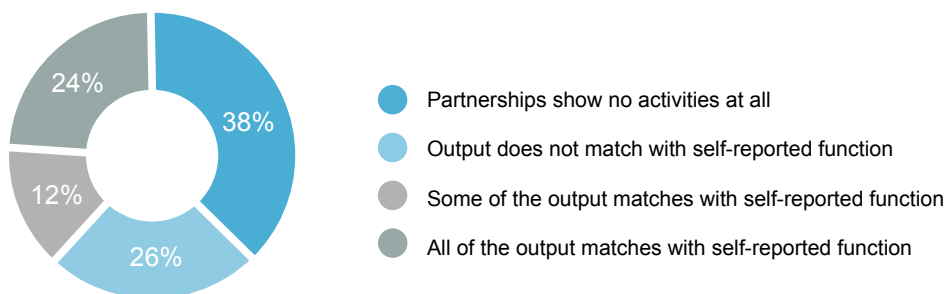
Improving the performance of multilateral, state-based sustainable development – in particular with regards to implementation – is a core argument for advancing partnerships as a governance tool above other mechanisms. Researchers have spent much time and effort assessing the merits of multi-stakeholder partnerships. In 2012, the results of a six-year study were published in the book *Public-private Partnerships for Sustainable Development: Emergence, Influence and Legitimacy* (Pattberg et al. 2012). It analysed the WSSD Type II partnerships in detail and constructed a Global Sustainability Partnership Database containing over 340 partnerships to support the research. In 2014, another six-year project documented in the book *Transnational Partnerships: Effectively providing for Sustainable Development* reported its results on 21 transnational partnerships using in-depth case studies (Beisheim and Liese 2014). Moreover, a large number of workshops, colloquiums and smaller projects have contributed to the knowledge base, for example, *Partnerships, Governance and Sustainable Development* (Glasbergen, Biermann, and Mol 2007), *Enhancing the Effectiveness of Sustainability Partnerships* (Vollmer 2009), including a great number of scientific articles (see e.g., Andonova and Levy 2003; Andonova 2010; Pattberg 2010; Hale and Mauzerall 2004; Zammit 2003; Bäckstrand et al. 2012; Börzel and Risse 2005; Bitzer, Francken and Glasbergen 2008). Consequently, there is a broad literature on transnational multi-stakeholder partnerships to draw on.

The overall picture that emerges is rather sobering. Multi-stakeholder partnerships have, by and large, not lived up to their promise. There are certainly some that perform excellently and have had impressive impacts on their issue areas but these should be considered as anomalies. For example, health-related partnerships (such as the GAVI Alliance that attempts to enhance the dissemination of immunisation or the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria) as well as standard setting partnerships such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) have been highly effective in realising their goals and enticing behavioural change (Beisheim and Liese 2014; Pattberg 2005). On the other hand, a recent analysis of more than 340 Type II partnerships shows a disappointingly low level of effectiveness (Pattberg et al. 2012; Schäferhoff, Campe, and Kaan 2009).

Four main conclusions can be drawn.

(1) In total, 330 partnerships were sampled. The following conclusions from the analysis can be drawn: 38 per cent of all partnerships sampled are simply not active or do not have measurable output. 26 per cent of all partnerships show activities but those are not directly related to their publicly stated goals and ambitions. Their output (such as research, capacity building, training or building infrastructure) does not match their self-reported function (e.g., service provision, knowledge transfer or standard setting). In 12 per cent of the sample, the output partially matches with the self-reported function and in 24 per cent of the sample, all output matches with their self-reported function.

Figure 2.1 Partnership output related to publicly stated goals and ambitions



(2) At an aggregate level, partnerships do not seem to address core functions where their particular role and comparative advantage was expected to lie: to initiate new global governance norms in areas where governments fail to take action; to help implement existing intergovernmental regulations; and to increase the inclusiveness and participation in global governance by bringing in actors that have so far been marginalised. To illustrate the latter point, Figure 2.2 shows the number of partners from a specific sector in the total partnership sample (Pattberg et al. 2012, 252-253). The marginalisation of key stakeholders (in particular the UN major groups) is evident. In addition, as Figure 2.3 indicates, the majority of partnerships are led by international organisations and state agencies while business actors are less prominent. This finding contradicts assumptions that the partnership approach can easily be subsumed under a 'privatisation of governance' framing. These findings rather point to the insufficiently broad nature of multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Figure 2.2: Number of partners from different sectors

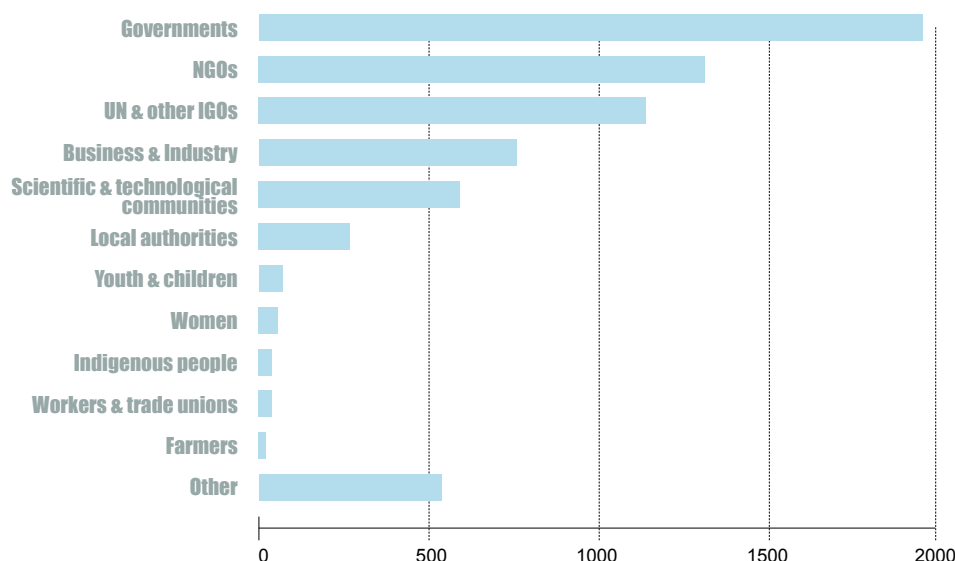
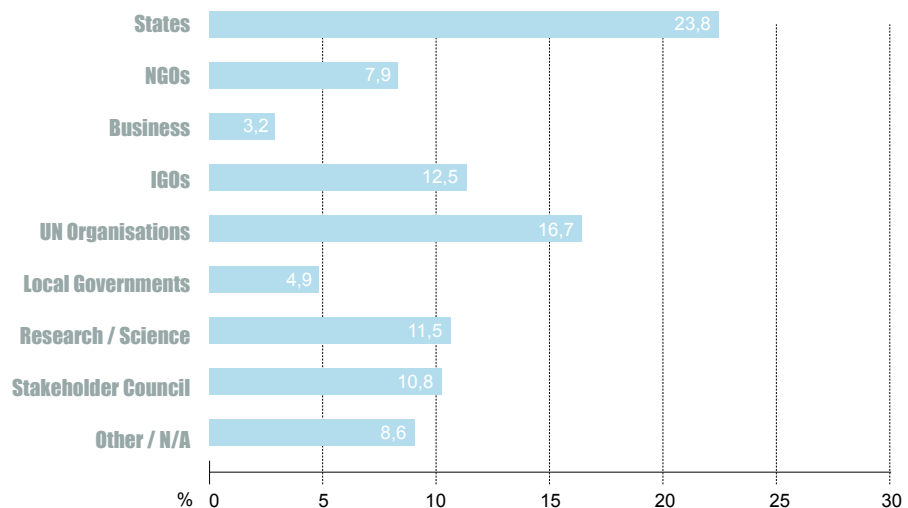


Figure 2.3: Number of partnerships led by partners from a specific sector



(3) At the level of individual partnerships, the lack of organisational capacity, resources and transparency becomes evident. Only around 15 per cent (of the total sample of 340) indicate a budget plan, 23 per cent report on office space, only 30 per cent have dedicated and identifiable staff members and just about 5 per cent of all partnerships have an openly available memorandum of understanding (that would outline the precise roles and responsibilities of partners) (Pattberg et al. 2012, 257-258).

(4) Multi-stakeholder partnerships have also been reported to provide a highly visible platform for controversial technologies to gain recognition at the UN level due to the lack of a strict screening and follow-up process. These technologies and practices introduced by partnerships for sustainable development include nuclear energy, biotechnologies, biofuels, PVC and vinyl, to name a few. As Mert and Chan (2012, 40) conclude: “partnerships are not just neutral instruments for implementing internationally accepted sustainability norms, such as the Millennium Development Goals and Agenda 21, but rather sites of contestation over distinct technologies and practices.”

Finally, an important discussion relevant for the building blocks discussed later in this report relates to explaining the variation in effectiveness of multi-stakeholder partnerships. First, a key observation is that design matters (Beisheim and Liese 2014; Schäferhoff, Campe, and Kaan 2009). Studying 21 transnational partnerships, Beisheim and Liese find that “level of institutionalisation” and “process” are the best predictors for level of effectiveness (2014). “Level of institutionalisation” is measured across three criteria: obligation, delegation and precision (Abbott et al. 2000). Obligation means to what level the actors are bound to by their commitment, e.g., binding laws or voluntary pledges; Precision means to what extent the rules of the partnership are clear and unambiguous; and Delegation indicates to what extent third-party actors have been given the authority to implement or, in particular, monitor or enforce the goals and decisions taken by the stakeholders in the partnership. Table 2.2 below outlines how Beisheim and Liese operationalise the different levels of institutionalisation.

Table 2.2: Levels of Institutionalisation

	Obligation	Precision of norms	Delegation
High	Binding rules	Determinate rules: narrow room for interpretation	External monitoring, centralised enforcement
Medium	Contingent obligations and escape clauses	Areas of discretion and issues of interpretation	Internal or external monitoring and publicity
Low	Rules not binding	Broad rules, impossible to determine compliance	No or confidential monitoring

Adapted from Beisheim and Liese (2011, 127)

The main conclusion from this line of research is that a high level of institutionalisation appears to lead to a high level of effectiveness. Furthermore, Beisheim and Liese also find that process management, i.e., how professional and efficient the management of the partnership is, can explain variation in the effectiveness of a partnership.

Legitimacy

The legitimacy of partnerships – i.e., the acceptance of a norm shared by a community – has been a matter of much discussion in the partnership debate (Bäckstrand 2006). And rightly so, since the promise of partnerships is a win-win situation where effectiveness and the democratic credentials of global governance both increase (Bäckstrand et al. 2012). However, arriving at a tangible and common understanding of the relationship between partnerships and legitimacy has been difficult. We can identify four themes in the literature: (i) metrics, (ii) inclusiveness, (iii) accountability and (iv) legitimacy vs. effectiveness.

First, scholars argue about which metrics should be used to measure levels of legitimacy (Bäckstrand 2012). Keohane, for example, suggests that while we can use concepts of legitimacy from liberal democracy such as accountability, inclusiveness and transparency, the threshold for when a transnational partnership is legitimate needs to be lower than in a domestic setting due to a lack of one global demos (Keohane 2011). Otherwise, no partnership would be legitimate.

Second, multi-stakeholder partnerships hold the promise of being more inclusive than other governance instruments as they, theoretically, involve all segments of society. Critical writers dispute this positive reading of partnerships and argue that the rollback of public authority and the increasing role of companies is merely a sign of more power going to private interests rather than to society as a whole (Miraftab 2004). Data shows how countries from the northern hemisphere, along with large international organisations, are overrepresented, whereas poorer southern countries, CSOs and private stakeholders are underrepresented (Bäckstrand 2012; Pattberg 2010; Hale and Mauzerall 2004).

Third, multi-stakeholder partnerships have been discussed in terms of accountability. Bäckstrand argues (2006) that partnerships pose a problem due to their non-hierarchical network structure. In a traditional state-driven multilateral agreement, states are to be held accountable for their actions by their citizens. In networked governance, authority and thus accountability is spread across the members of the network. Hale and Mauzerall highlight that several observers are sceptical to the motives behind partnership creation and fear that it will be mainly promises and few results (2004).

Finally, there is an ongoing discussion as to whether legitimacy is conducive for effectiveness. Intuitively, an inclusive attitude for new members in the partnership bolsters legitimacy. Also social constructivists argue that compliance and commitment increase when organisations internalise norms and engage in organisational and institutional learning (Checkel 2001). However, there is little evidence that inclusiveness is linked to effectiveness (Liese and Beisheim 2011).

In conclusion, while multi-stakeholder partnerships should not be compared to state-based forms of legitimacy, research has questioned the claim that partnerships automatically improve participation and accountability in global governance. Research has also shown that legitimacy has positive effects on the performance of partnerships and therefore should be carefully monitored and managed.

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR SUCCESSFUL MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS










Given the empirical findings on the limited success of multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development to date, what can be done to improve their future performance? Sustainable development issues generally “pit business values for progress, profit and self-interested consumption of the environment against environmental values that stress ecological sustainability, interdependence with the natural works and opposition to exploitation” (Gray 2007, 30). For partnerships, the overarching challenge is therefore to bridge these conflicting values and agendas by creating a group that can establish trust, devise rules and procedures and work together towards supplying a common good.

Designing a successful partnership

Building on the knowledge described in the previous sections, we have identified nine key aspects – divided into three categories (Actors, Process and Context) – that influence the outcome of a multi-stakeholder partnership. We call these the ‘nine building blocks for successful transnational multi-stakeholder partnerships’ (see Figure 3.1).

The coming sections elaborate on each of the aspects and distil practical advice on what can be done to increase the likelihood of success under each building block.

Figure 3.1: Nine building blocks for successful partnerships

ACTORS	1. LEADERSHIP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create momentum • Guide process • Foster group cohesion
	2. PARTNERS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine the right resources and skills • Create comparative advantage • Prioritise inclusiveness
PROCESS	3. GOAL-SETTING 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create common vision and goals • Ensure high ambitions and precision • Align with global goals and norms
	4. FUNDING 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek innovative funding solutions • Diversify funding sources • Invest in professional fund management
	5. MANAGEMENT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish independent Secretariat • Invest in full-time professional staff • Ensure professional process management
	6. MONITORING, REPORTING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strive for transparency • Create robust and measurable indicators • Learn from mistakes and adapt behavior
CONTEXT	7. META-GOVERNANCE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set minimum criteria for partnerships • Entrust institution with vetting procedures • Explore linkages between partnerships
	8. PROBLEM-STRUCTURE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge differences in problems • Adapt expectations • Design according to problem-structure
	9. POLITICAL & SOCIAL CONTEXT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify problems (e.g. corruption) • Engage in capacity building • Choose most favorable context

Actors

Leadership

Proactive and good leadership, both from individuals and from organisations, is essential for a partnership to succeed. Throughout its lifetime, different types of leadership are needed. Young, for example, differentiates between structural, entrepreneurial and intellectual leadership (Young 1991). Structural leadership is exercised when an actor can translate its material resources into power by, for example, providing side-payments, entrepreneurial leaders use their negotiation and framing skills to reach results and, finally, intellectual leadership provide the intellectual capital and background in a process (Young 1991). At the start of a partnership, a central role is that of the entrepreneur or broker (Glasbergen 2010), also called the “convener” (Gray 2007) or “orchestrator” (Abbott and Snidal 2010). In transnational politics, these are often CSOs or international organisations, for example, the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) that is highly active in forming multi-stakeholder partnerships (Hale and Roger 2014). Consequently, ‘convening power’ is an important asset in this early phase of partnership building.

While we recognise that good leadership is a red thread through the literature that describes successful partnerships, it remains a vague concept. Most observers simply note that leadership is essential, yet provide little information on the conditions for effective leadership and means to foster it. Nevertheless, the following recommendation can be made:

- Identify and manage the different types of leadership needed for the partnership to succeed.

Partners

The combined willingness, capability and resources of partners, i.e., the organisations and individuals that govern the partnership, who are also often the founders (Beisheim 2012), to fulfil the goals of the partnership are crucial to success. In particular, the level of engagement from the most powerful and influential members is important (Newell, Pattberg, and Schroeder 2012).

Partnerships are, in theory, networks of resource exchange, meaning that balancing powers and finding a working mix of resources, knowledge and capabilities is necessary to exploit synergies and enable a fruitful division of labour.

Moreover, inclusiveness and involving the ‘right’ partners requires attention. There are several cases where omitting powerful and important stakeholders (relative to the issue area) has led to the end of a partnership or a sub-optimal performance (Wigell 2008; Gray 2007, 36). Two examples of omission of partners or insufficient ‘anchoring’ are noteworthy. First, when the World Health Assembly (WHA) decided on the establishment of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) in 1988, some countries were unaware of what they committed to due to poor and unclear communication. This led to further discussions once the partnership was operational and may have hampered the speed of implementation, illustrating how anchoring of decisions should be carried out among all relevant partners and stakeholders to avoid problems further down the line (Aylward et al. 2003).

Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI)

Homepage	www.polioeradication.org/
Year established	1988
Headquarters	WHO & UNICEF HQs, regional and country offices.
Function	Service provision/implementation
Funding	Since the start of the partnership, Rotary International, a private foundation, will have given more than US\$600 million by the end of 2005 and have contributed to much of the fundraising from governments (Aylward et al. 2003). Overall, over US\$10 billion has been given by international donors (GPEI 2014). For the coming budget periods, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has also made considerable pledges, overtaking the lead position from Rotary International.
Reporting	GPEI publishes multi-annual strategic plans, accompanied by a document outlining the financial resource requirements (FRRs). These are openly available and complemented with annual reports that provide transparency and an opportunity for accountability. The annual reports are available in English and French and an executive summary is available in the other four UN languages.
Founding partners	The partnership has been led by the World Health Organisation (WHO), Rotary International, the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). It also engages a number of other public and private partners as well as national governments.
Background	GPEI has been described as the single largest internationally coordinated health project to date (Duintjer Tebbens et al. 2010). Following a series of events during the 1980s, including fundraising campaigns by Rotary International and ground-breaking work by the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO), GPEI was formed after a resolution adopted by the 41st World Health Assembly (WHA) in 1988 committing to eradicate poliomyelitis (polio) globally by the year 2000 (Shiffman, Beer, and Wu 2002). The partnership's creation was the result of a global agreement across low, middle and high income countries and partly inspired by the successes of an international campaign to eradicate smallpox that ended in 1977 (Aylward et al. 2003).
Results	<p>GPEI has enjoyed tremendous success in reaching its goals. In 1999, type 2 wild polioviruses was effectively eradicated and fewer than 2,000 annual paralytic poliomyelitis cases of wild types 1 and 3 have since then been reported (Duintjer Tebbens et al. 2010). In 1988, over 125 mainly low-income countries had reports of polio. By 2002, this number had decreased to seven countries (Aylward et al. 2003). After some changes in strategy, recent years have also brought down numbers of reported cases substantially in the countries with large pockets of polio infections, notably India and Nigeria (Aylward and Tangermann 2011). In 2013-14, polio cases have been reported in ten countries including Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia and Syria, however, only in Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Pakistan is the virus endemic (www.polioeradication.org).</p> <p>By 2000, all countries part of the WHA had adopted versions of the WHO-recommended polio eradication strategies and reported cases had dropped 99 per cent from 1988 levels (Aylward and Tangermann 2011). In low-income countries, huge efforts were made to reach a sufficiently high amount of children (Aylward et al. 2003). In India, for example, National Immunisation Day (NID) led to the immunisation of 150 million children. This was repeated a month later and then annually for more than five years.</p>
Analysis	<p>The successful creation of GPEI has been explained by Shiffman, Beer and Wu as the result of three forces: a widespread acceptance of polio as a threat, a perception that we were able to eradicate the disease and the formation of supporting transnational health actors such as international organisations to fight the disease (2002). Koenig-Archibugi makes an interesting argument saying that the success of GPEI is not only the result of the convergence of states' interests, but also due to the partnership's ability to reshape the preferences of states by engaging national health officials and actors in international dialogue and thereby 'socialising' them into the ideas of GPEI (Koenig-Archibugi 2011, 170).</p> <p>The cost-effectiveness of GPEI has been a continuing matter of discussion. Some authors believe that the large amounts of funding could better be spent on other diseases. And indeed, Shiffman has shown that a disproportionate amount of funding is spent on polio given its relative negative impacts vis-à-vis other diseases (2006). Nevertheless, other analyses of GPEI shows that even though costs have increased substantially, the overall result is highly cost-effective compared to common routine vaccinations (Duintjer Tebbens et al.</p> <p>2010; Aylward et al. 2003). Net incremental benefits for the partnership between the years of 1988 to 2035 have been estimated at US\$40 to 50 billion in net present value, of which 85 per cent has been achieved in low-income countries, mainly from preventing the cases of paralysis caused by polio (Duintjer Tebbens et al. 2010). However, funding remains a problem. GPEI still suffers from a lack of resources</p>

and weak management in some parts of the organisation. Weak implementation of Supplementary Immunisation Activities (SIA) also led to lower political support in the four countries that still suffer from polio, including India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Afghanistan (Aylward and Tangermann 2011). For the 2013 to 2018 period, there is still a funding gap of US\$563 million (GPEI 2014).

What lessons can be drawn for our study? An analysis of the GPEI presented in the Lancet in 2003 drew six lessons from the partnership process. First, goal setting should be based on technically sound strategies that can operate on a large geographical scope. Second, it is important to create buy-in from an 'appropriate international forum' before launching the partnership to ensure sustainable financing and commitment. Third, when substantial local engagement is needed, there needs to be sufficient capacity on the ground to make this happen, which could be facilitated by the partnership's management. Fourth, a sound financing mechanism and burden-sharing model should be devised. Fifth, international health goals should be designed within current health systems to receive support. And sixth, laggards should be identified early in the process to assist in capacity building and resources (Aylward et al. 2003). To reach all children, large support was given by private sector, military, transport and information ministries (ibid.). Coordination of the partnership was created by setting up operations on international, regional and local levels. The most resource intensive activity, the National Immunisation Days (NIDs), were made possible due to vast input from volunteers.

Second, the effectiveness of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) is based on the ability of the national multi-stakeholder group to actively engage with their government in sharing information about resource-related payments. Capacity and willingness of public actors to support the EITI process are important obstacles here. Moreover the effectiveness of EITI is also limited by varying levels of support from civil society. On the one hand, EITI is a multi-stakeholder initiative that gives CSOs a voice and influence. On the other hand, many internationally campaigning CSOs think of the EITI as a second-best solution and lobby for a hard-law approach to the problem. Consequently, inclusion of and clear communication to the most relevant partners for solving the problem at hand is essential. However, several case studies show how anchoring decisions and establishing contacts with the target groups are also necessary to enable change.

Another key challenge is power asymmetries between members in the partnership. For example, Visseren-Hamakers and colleagues show that in national-level partnerships in some Southern countries, governments and industry have a lot of experience working closely together, however, less so with civil society groups. If civil society was included in decision-making, it was through consultation rather than as an equal partner (2007). Hence, in these cases, capacity building for civil society groups should be considered. Moreover, partnerships including transnational corporations (TNCs) often suffer from power asymmetry in terms of sheer financial and human resources and information. This can be detrimental to trust among members and should be addressed.

A central tool for addressing power asymmetries is transparency. Engaging and ensuring open and transparent communication, decision-making procedures and evaluations increases the likelihood of having weaker parties participate and access the outcomes of the partnership, in particular since the results are likely to mirror the power balance among the partners.

The following recommendations can be made:

- Conduct a detailed and thorough needs assessment (what partners would be needed to induce change?). Key criteria should be capacity, willingness and interests in attending.
- Map the prevalent values and identities of potential partners, and try to devise counter-arguments, common points of interest and where bargaining could be successful and not successful.
- Ensure and promote open and transparent communication, decision-making and evaluation.

Process

Goal setting

High ambition levels and precise targets are conducive to successful partnerships. Setting a clear and measurable goal has at least three benefits. First, it provides certainty for both members in the group and external stakeholders to adjust behaviour and policy. It facilitates monitoring, reporting and evaluation, which increases the possibility of correcting problems. It also increases the possibility of holding a partnership accountable and thus is expected to have a positive effect on legitimacy.

Beisheim and Liese show that the effectiveness of a partnerships depends on the “precision of norms” (2011). A high level of precision in rules and norms means that there is only limited room for interpretation. Lower degrees of precision open up space for discretion and interpretation, or even render the rules so vague and broad that they impede compliance, monitoring, reporting and evaluation, and consequently limit accountability and transparency. Consider, for example, the difference in the target between GPEI and CCAC: “eradicate all polio cases by 2000” (GPEI’s initial target) and “raising awareness of short-lived climate pollutant impact and mitigation strategies” (CCAC’s first objective). Precise rules and goals also have a stabilising and reassuring effect on governments and firms to invest resources when trying to achieve the goals of the partnership (Keohane and Victor 2011). Precision and stringency is particularly important for standard setting partnerships (Kalfagianni and Pattberg 2013).

Ambitious and precise goals should be developed already in the start-up phase, which offers the opportunity to develop a common vision among the partners. During the lifetime of a partnership, ambitions and goals should periodically be reviewed in order to adapt them to changing circumstances. Visseren-Hamakers and colleagues argue that performance is likely to increase if the members of a partnership share a basic consensus on the strategies used to reach sustainable development, on development cooperation and on partnerships as a governance mechanism (2007, 163). Since multi-stakeholder partnerships engage stakeholders with different frames, identities, constituencies and goals, there needs to be a common understanding on key drivers of the problem and a vision on how to address them. Especially non-state actors with a more inclusive perspective on sustainable development (or those actors that focus on output effectiveness) tend shy away from ineffective partnerships

Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)

Homepage	http://eiti.org/
Year established	2002
Headquarters	Oslo (2003-2006: London). Staff in secretariat: 19
Function	Standard setting
Funding	Funding comes from supporting countries (45 per cent) and supporting companies (55 per cent). Costs of validation of EITI compliance are borne by the countries being validated. Total costs for international management (including staff) are approximately \$US3 million p.a.
Reporting	Country reports (candidate and compliant countries) are published on the website. Funding information and accounting is available. No annual reports of EITI are available. EITI board meeting minutes are available.
Founding partners	UK Department for International Development (DFID), companies from the extractive industries sector, civil society organisations.
Background	<p>The late 1990s saw an increased academic interest in the 'resource curse', discussing how the availability of oil, gas and mining resources was linked to poverty, underdevelopment and corruption. By the year 2000, a number of civil society organisations (e.g., Global Witness, Human Rights Watch and Oxfam) had placed the issue of resource revenues and transparency on the international agenda. Supported by specific business interests (e.g., George Soros Open Society Initiative implemented a 'Revenue Watch' programme), momentum was building up for a multi-stakeholder-based initiative. Around the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), the UK Government (i.e., DFID) organised a meeting bringing together key stakeholders from the extractive industries sector and civil society organisations. UK Prime Minister Tony Blair supported the approach in a written speech for the WSSD. In 2003, a conference was convened in London to agree on a set of principles for what would become the EITI.</p> <p>Before EITI was established as an independent organisation headquartered in Oslo, Norway, it was hosted by DFID in London (2003-2006). In 2013, at the global EITI conference in Sydney, the new EITI Standard was adopted, replacing the older EITI rules. The new standard is expected to address a number of shortcomings in the EITI process that have been identified in previous assessments (see below).</p>
Results	<p>As of 2014, 27 countries are in full compliance with the EITI Standard, while 17 countries have candidate status (and thus need to prove compliance through validation within an 18 month period). Out of 44 EITI countries, 35 have produced a report according to the EITI rules. Beyond this basic data on standard uptake and compliance, a limited number of studies show concrete impacts on the ground.</p> <p>For example, in a 2011 evaluation of EITI carried out by Reite and colleagues (2011), the author found evidence of concrete outputs and outcomes attributable to EITI in Gabon, Mongolia and Nigeria. However, the analysis concludes that while EITI has created links to broader governance reform processes within countries, it is not a significant driver for change. The overall assessment prevailing in the academic literature (e.g., Aaronson 2011; Hauffer 2010) is that the EITI has been influential in placing the idea of resource-related transparency on the agenda of policy-makers and business actors, while broader impacts on corruption and development in specific countries are hard to establish. The 2013 review and update of the EITI rules (now the EITI Standard) is a direct reaction to these shortcomings.</p>
Analysis	<p>A number of factors have been identified that explain the observed performance of the EITI to date. First, contributing to its broad acceptance and visibility in global debates about resource-based corruption and transparency, EITI has successfully built a functioning multi-stakeholder structure with clear roles and responsibilities. Particularly important here is leadership and strategic vision of the EITI board as well as transparent procedures for selecting representatives of all stakeholders. Also the funding structure in which supporting countries and business actors have an equal responsibility for supporting the EITI international secretariat has contributed to a stable multi-stakeholder initiative.</p> <p>However, a number of limitations have also been identified, in particular linked to EITI's limited impact on broader policy reforms. First, the effectiveness of the EITI approach is based on the ability of the national multi-stakeholder group to actively engage with their government in sharing information about resource-related payments. Capacity and willingness of public actors to support the EITI process are important obstacles here. Second, the effectiveness of EITI is also limited by varying levels of support from civil society. On the one hand, EITI is a multi-stakeholder initiative that gives CSOs voice and influence. On the other hand, many international campaigning CSOs think of the EITI as a second-best solution and lobby for a hard-law approach to the problem. Third, while the EITI secretariat is found to effectively perform its role of supporting implementation countries in the EITI process, it has been less successful in training the broader public on how to use the EITI reports. In other words, the EITI has been lacking a broader theory of change that would guide its strategic decisions. The recent revisions of the EITI Standard are a reaction to this shortcoming. On this account, the EITI has proven to be flexible and adaptive in the context of fast-changing policy setting.</p>

Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short Lived Climate Pollutants (CCAC)

Homepage	www.unep.org/ccac/
Year established	2012
Headquarters	Hosted at the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) in Paris, France
Function	Knowledge transfer
Funding	UNEP is hosting a CCAC Trust Fund for different initiatives. Pledges for 2012 to 2015 amount to approximately US\$46 million, of which US\$29 million has been deposited with UNEP. In total, US\$12 million was allocated to the project initiative by October 2013 (CCAC 2013).
Reporting	The reporting of the CCAC's activities is scarce. Beyond an executive summary of a 2012-2013 Annual Initiative Progress Report, the homepage includes few detail on, for example, the progress of the initiatives, projects, allocation of money, source of funding, state of the problem or tangible results.
Founding partners	Bangladesh, Canada, Ghana, Mexico, Sweden and the United States along with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
Background	Increased attention to climate change coupled with global gridlock in the multilateral negotiations and increased understanding of the impacts of short-lived pollutants (SLCP) in the atmosphere, such as black carbon, methane and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), led a number of governments together with UNEP to establish the CCAC. Due to their strong climate forcing and relatively short life in the atmosphere, SLCPs were seen as an opportunity to mitigate climate change in the short term (Ramanathan and Carmichael 2008).
Results	<p>Since the CCAC it still in the making, it is difficult to attribute any direct effects or signs of behavioural change among its partners. There are also few articles on the initiative and public information is scarce.</p> <p>The CCAC has become a popular initiative, growing from seven partners at its inception in 2012 to over 80 partners in 2014. To pick this 'low hanging fruit', the voluntary partnership CCAC was created in 2012 and today comprises the worlds' richest countries, including the G8 (Department of State 2013), and has attracted high-level politicians to its meetings. The capacity is therefore substantial and Blok and colleagues' estimate that the CCAC could realise half of the technical mitigation potential resulting in 1 Gt CO₂ eq (2012, 474), making it a potentially highly effective ICI.</p>
Analysis	<p>Since there are few results, the analysis is also difficult to really substantiate. Besides attracting much media and political attention, with the result of more partners joining the group, the CCAC also produced a number of informative and authoritative reports on different aspects of SLCPs, including mitigation options. A partnership structure is in place and a number of key issue areas have been identified, such as cooking stoves.</p> <p>Based on the building blocks identified in the study, a number of observations can be made.</p> <p>First, even though the tracking and creation of inventories are core functions of the CCAC (CCAC 2012a), the CCAC lacks ambitious and precise targets. It is therefore difficult to really assess the effectiveness of the partnerships. The governance of the CCAC is heavily built around voluntary participation without binding commitments to targets or provision of funding (CCAC 2012a). This voluntary character is clearly reflected in the initiatives to reduce SLCPs that form the backbone of the CCAC's work, including actions on, for example, heavy-duty diesel vehicles and engines, agriculture, household cooking and domestic heating. An analysis of the fact sheets that explain each initiative shows the centrality of soft action, such as capacity development, networking, show of best practices and awareness raising. Only the initiative on heavy-duty diesel vehicles and engines aims to attain "quantifiable and significant" reductions of SLCPs (CCAC 2012b). In this sense, the CCAC clearly lacks the instruments and governance structure to be held accountable (at least in the short term). According to the building block on 'goal setting', precise and ambitious targets were conducive for a successful outcome, however, at the moment, the CCAC lacks these preconditions.</p> <p>Second, regarding partners, the CCAC displays an impressive array of developed and developing nations and non-state organisations from research, environmental CSOs, and sub-national governments. Even though international organisations such as UNEP and the World Bank hold core positions in the partnership, the CCAC is clearly state-driven. However, the framework agreement of the CCAC shows the open attitude towards non-state actors. The CCAC is open for cooperation with non-state partners and their participation in high-level events, however, they are not allowed to vote on certain core functions (Lode 2013). The voluntary nature of the CCAC increases the chances of creating an equitable distribution of burdens and benefits, since partners needs to agree on measures among themselves rather than in a general assembly with democratic voting rules.</p>

Finally, emissions of SLCPs have effects on climate change and air quality and are partly a result of the combat against ozone-depleting substances. Consequently, some SLCPs are regulated internationally by the UNFCCC, LRTAP and the Montreal Protocol, while others are not regulated at all. The CCAC therefore fills a niche in the institutional architecture of global climate governance by coordinating action and cooperation across the regimes. In its framework document, the CCAC recognises the central importance of the UNFCCC to mitigating climate change (CCAC 2012a). In this sense, the CCAC represents and adds to the 'cooperative fragmentation' (Biermann et al. 2009) of the global climate regime by adding to the number of institutions and decision-making procedures, but being loosely integrated with the UNFCCC, and the core institution does not include all of the countries that are important to the issue area, in this case China.

Overall, the CCAC lacks many of the elements we have identified as necessary for a successful partnership. The current constellation of (state) actors appears to be committed to the task, but there is no way to say whether the partnership would survive a large setback, for example, a shift in government among key players such as the US. Stakeholders are participating on an unequal basis. Reporting and monitoring is lacking. It also lacks clear and precise goals, several key countries such as China, a clear and well-structured funding mechanism, an independent secretariat with an adequate number of personnel and its position in the governance architecture of climate change is unclear.

(Visseren-Hamakers, Arts, and Glasbergen 2007). As a consequence, the lack of precise and ambitious goals in current partnerships could be an explanation for why civil society actors often are under-represented. Moreover, partnerships could be conducive to change frames and prioritisations. GPEI, for example, fostered international dialogue between national health officers and actors on polio that socialised governments into increasing their attention onto combating the disease and joining the partnership (Koenig-Archibugi 2011).

Finally, to foster coherence in the international system and to support international and transnational sustainable development, goals should be aligned with international norms already in place. When studying the successes of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, Aylward and colleagues argue that an endorsement of the policy goals from a high-level forum – the World Health Assembly in GPEI's case – enables broad debates and buy-in once the partnership is scaled up (2003). For polio eradication, the large discussions arose from whether the partnership's activities weakened national capacities to deal with other diseases or inflicted opportunity costs of strengthening the national health system overall (Aylward et al. 2003). A high-level endorsement ensured the continuation of the partnership.

The following recommendations can be made:

- Understand the importance of developing a common vision and goals from the very outset.
- Work towards a common problem definition.
- Aim for the clear and measurable goals.
- Map the compatibility of partnership goals with other related goals (e.g., SDGs, CSR, human rights) and work towards aligning them.

Funding

Adequate funding and resources are cornerstones for a stable and successful partnership. Some have argued that the emergence of partnerships could lead to more unstable streams of funding as financing is increasingly provided through voluntary and “ultimately unpredictable” goodwill from private financiers (Martens 2007, 5). However, there is little evidence that governments are more likely to sustain a constant stream of funding than private funders such as foundations, and it is plausible to think that funding shortages can be actively managed by the partnership’s management. Governments are by no means the only source of income for partnerships, while private initiatives and foundations are becoming wealthier and perhaps increasingly important for providing common goods. Sourcing funds is thus an increasingly important task for partnership managers and it is wise to have a clear and effective strategy for attracting funding in a professional way. For example, Aylward and colleagues note that in the case of GPEI, soliciting professional lobby firms to target political decision-makers and international forums has contributed to securing sufficient funding from donor governments (2003).

There is no template for what funding model works best. Successful organisations have employed a number of approaches, for example, limiting donations coming from one source, relying on membership fees or funding from the partnership members and funnelling money generated from partnership activities back to the organisations, for example, in the case of standard setting (Reinicke et al. 2000). GAVI is often mentioned as a particularly good example for innovative financing where they have created two funding streams by issuing bonds and creating a fund to promise pharmaceutical companies with a set price given that they would develop a certain type of drug.

Also for the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), the funding structure appears to have contributed to its successful implementation. 45 per cent of EITI’s funding comes from supporting countries and 55 per cent from supporting companies. All costs for validation of EITI compliance are borne by countries being validated.

Moreover, it is plausible to assume that those partnerships that can showcase their actions and prove their effectiveness are more likely to attract funding. To stand out in the competition, funding is thus deeply intertwined with goal setting, monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

The following recommendations can be made:

- Establish well-organised resources and finance management units for securing and managing funds.
- Hire a fundraising manager and/or train management staff in fundraising.
- Consider fundraising purposes in communications with external stakeholders and when reporting on the progress on the partnership.
- Set realistic goals and implement procedures that are plausible to reach and easy to communicate to possible funders.

Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI)

Homepage	www.gavialliance.org/
Year established	2000
Headquarters	Geneva, Switzerland and Washington DC., USA
Function	Service provision/implementation
Funding	GAVI's two funding streams, innovative finance and direct contributions, account for 37 and 63 per cent respectively of the Alliance's overall funding portfolio. The main direct funders are the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and governments such as the UK.
Reporting	GAVI has an impressive transparency and reporting flow. Annual financial reports, openly accessible via http://www.gavialliance.org/funding/financial-reports/ , and several other reports on, for example, themes and progress are readily available online. It also has a set of key performance indicators, some with quantified targets, available for display online.
Founding partners	The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Programme for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH), the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (IFPMA), the World Bank, the US Agency for International Development, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).
Background	The GAVI Alliance was launched as a public-private partnership at the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2000 by a number of key players in the field of global health. For the first six years, it worked on vaccine provision and development and supporting country-level immunisation programmes. Since 2006, it has also worked with Health System Strengthening (HSS) (Harmer and Bruen 2011). GAVI is the successor of other vaccine oriented-partnerships such as the Children's Vaccine Initiative. Today, it is active in over 70 countries worldwide.
Results	<p>GAVI is considered highly effective (Beisheim and Liese 2014). Between 2000 and 2008, US\$2 billion was delivered to countries for vaccines, immunisation programmes and health system strengthening (HSS), 51 million children were vaccinated against diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis, protecting 213 million children with new and underused vaccines, 192 million children against Hepatitis B, 42 million against Haemophilus influenzae type b, and 36 million children against yellow fever (Harmer and Bruen 2011). Since the GAVI alliance was launched, global immunisation coverage went up from 73 per cent in 2000 to 83 per cent in 2012 (GAVI 2014).</p> <p>GAVI has been particularly successful in attracting funding from both public and private donors. In total, the partnership has received almost US\$10 billion. In 2013 alone, 1.7 billion was received, with the lion's share coming from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the United Kingdom.¹</p>
Analysis	<p>Four factors appear to explain GAVI's success: the institutional design, the high level of trust and commitment, the innovative funding mechanisms and process management.</p> <p>Schäferhoff links GAVI's success with its institutional design and high level of precision, obligation and delegation (2014). Beisheim and colleagues attribute much of the design (and thus implicitly success) of GAVI to the instrumental and entrepreneurial leadership of the Bill and Melina Gates Foundation (Beisheim, Liese, and Vosseler 2014). They argue that the Foundation could absorb the large transactional costs often associated with starting up a partnership. However, Buse and Tanaka argue that a shared sense of purpose, trust and commitment rather than clearly defined structure was the key to GAVI's success (2011).</p> <p>Harmer and Bruen (2011) attribute much of GAVI's success to its unique feature of having various funding mechanisms. GAVI has four funding sources including direct funding, matching funding, the International Finance Facility for Immunisation (IFFIm) and Advanced Market Commitments (AMC). The latter two are fairly unique mechanisms where the administrative apparatus and treasury functions of the IFFIm are delegated to the World Bank. Financial stability is sought by issuing bonds on the capital markets together with backing long-term government pledges (Harmer and Bruen 2011). The AMC sets a guaranteed prize on vaccines for manufacturers once the product is on the market, under the condition that it lives up to a number of strict criteria. Disbursement of funds to recipient countries is made through a performance-based system and incentives are in place to reward higher immunisation rates (Harmer and Bruen 2011).</p> <p>GAVI's process management is also considered a contributing factor to its success. Initially hosted by UNICEF, it later separated offices in Geneva and Washington DC. It maintains a small and lean corporate-inspired structure and relies on local partners and agencies in recipient countries to develop and implement projects (Harmer and Bruen 2011).</p> <p>Problems with institutional fragmentation such as overlaps and duplication of processes, unsynchronised reporting, monitoring, review mechanisms and strategies have increase the transaction costs for the entire governance architecture and together with the World Bank and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, GAVI has started work on a Joint Funding Platform for Health System Strengthening. This was later transformed into the Health Systems Funding Platform.</p>

¹ Financial results can be downloaded from the GAVI website: www.gavialliance.org/funding/donor-contributions-pledges/

Management

There is a clear correlation between the effectiveness of a partnership and its process management (Liese and Beisheim 2011). While it is hardly surprising that effective and efficient internal organisation is conducive for the organisational goals to be met, in many cases, inadequate resources, time and thinking is spent on the managerial aspects of a partnership. While the verdict is still out on what governance structure a partnership should have to optimise effectiveness, some studies indicate that a small governing board of major donors supported by a secretariat and room for input by a select group of affected stakeholders is favourable for lean and effective process management and decision-making (Liese and Beisheim 2011). Common strategic plans, clear division of roles and responsibilities and multi-level forums to coordinate funding and resources have been identified as effective management structures (Aylward et al. 2003). Also smart management measures taken on a local level are found to facilitate success. Aylward and colleagues, for example, have argued that efficient management is key to the success of the GPEI by, for instance, providing clear and well-defined demands on the community and boosting local capacity to administer vaccinations (2003). Similarly, for the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), a functioning multi-stakeholder structure with clear roles and responsibilities clearly contributed to the broad acceptance and visibility in global debates about resource-based corruption and transparency. Particularly important is the leadership and strategic vision of the EITI board as well as transparent and legitimate procedures for selecting representatives of all stakeholders.

A reoccurring observation is that having full-time staff employed to service the partnership is conducive to effectiveness (Szulecki, Pattberg, and Biermann 2011; Beisheim 2012). A high level of institutionalisation with formal organisation and bureaucracy is thus preferable over a loosely coupled network structure with, for example, a hosted secretariat within an already existing organisation. For example, it has been shown that a partnership with a permanent and independent secretariat is more likely to be successful than a hosted partnership (Beisheim 2012). However, there needs to be a balance between level of institutionalisation and amount of red tape. Partnerships should rely on existing institutions as far as possible and avoid becoming a new institution or agency by limiting their bureaucratic work to only the essential coordination tasks (Reinicke et al. 2000). Szulecki and colleagues also find that organisational characteristics such as a strong 'corporate identity' appear to be correlated with effectiveness (2011).

The following recommendations can be made:

- Engage full-time staff, focusing solely on partnership tasks.
- Allow for staff with managerial experience to occupy key positions.
- Provide the means for ensuring effective communication between the process managers and the partnership members as well as between the partnership members.
- Aim for continuous, transparent and low-cost communication within the partnership.
- Establish an open and transparent knowledge exchange mechanism for everyone to share and take part of knowledge created by and relevant to the partnership.
- Establish clear and transparent rules and roles for procedural issues including staff recruitment, fundraising and decision-making.
- Create a clear, fair and transparent dispute resolution mechanism in case of conflicts
- Minimise the amount of red tape and bureaucracy needed to move things forward.
- Identify key limitations in the capacity among the partnership members and take measures to mitigate the problems that arise from unequal levels of resources and capacity.

Monitoring, reporting, evaluation and learning

An adequate and efficient monitoring, reporting and evaluation system is important for several reasons. First, it enables organisational learning. Institutions have proven more effective when they are able to adapt quickly to new circumstances. To manage this process, monitoring progress, producing reports and evaluating outcomes are essential tools for understanding how the partnership is doing vis-à-vis its targets and goals. Second, both public and private constituencies are increasingly demanding to see the impacts of their financial or in-kind contributions. In the case of the GPEI, for example, large institutional donors only agreed to join the initiative once the appropriate delivery mechanisms and impacts could be proven beyond anecdotal evidence (Aylward et al. 2003). Third and finally, monitoring, reporting and evaluation are needed to enhance transparency, which in turn is instrumental for process legitimacy (Wigell 2008; Bäckstrand 2012, 175).

There are striking differences in the monitoring, reporting and evaluation activities of partnerships. The GPEI, for example, releases multi-year strategic plans that are published online and widely discussed among academia and other stakeholders. These are followed up by annual reports, which provide transparency and the possibility for accountability by reporting on funding, achievements and trends. Another example where monitoring and reporting clearly have been supporting factors to success is REEEP, which has developed a monitoring mechanism that guarantees responsible and effective project spending. Projects need to submit quarterly reports containing outputs, impacts as well as detailing the timings, risks approach and media activity for each project alongside a financial review. These are in turn reviewed and recommended by Regional Secretariats and sent to the International Secretariat, which makes a decision regarding acceptance of progress and payments. When a project is completed, a final report on the whole initiative and finances is submitted, often prepared with the help of external experts and auditors. After a set period of time, a general impact assessment is conducted to examine the value of the project and its contribution to the more general goals (climate change mitigation, MDGs, future replication and regional scaling-up).

Whereas GPEI and REEEP publish extensive annual reports, strategy documents and third party evaluations online, CCAC has very sparse information available, at least in the public domain. A good example of learning from evaluation is the recent revision of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) standard, a clear reaction to shortcomings noted in a recent third-party report (Reite et al. 2011). On this account, the EITI has proven to be flexible and adaptive in the context of fast-changing policy setting.

The following recommendations can be made:

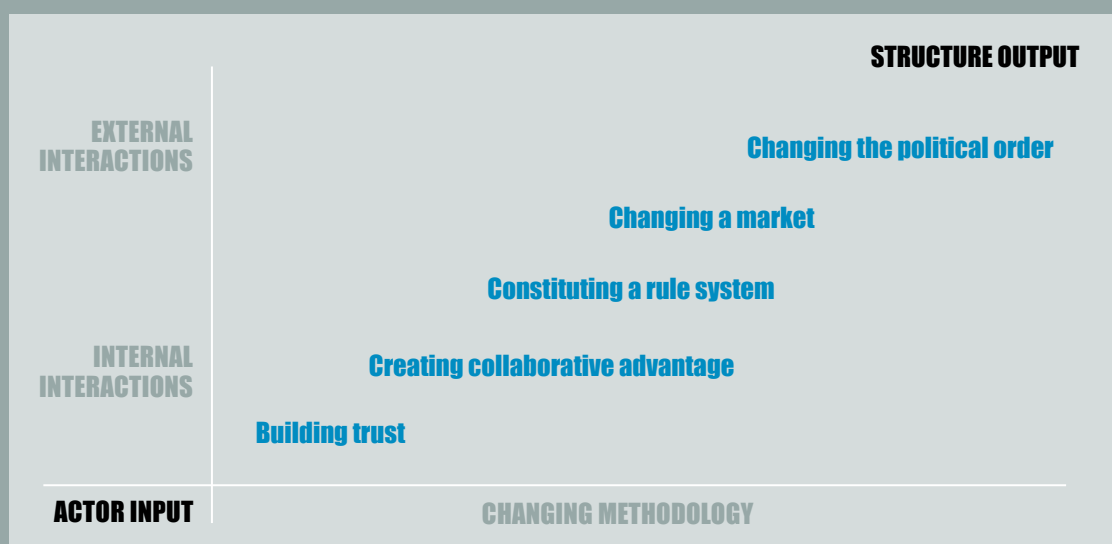
- Establish procedures for monitoring and evaluation including both internal (governance structure, financial administration, process management and decision-making) and external indicators (progress towards reaching the goals as well as other output and deliverables).
- Establish procedures to allow for change and adaptation based on monitoring and evaluation.
- Develop a clear overview of the intervention logic of the partnership's activities, set milestones and evaluation points. This is what is often referred to as "theory of change" or as Vollmer calls it, "impact pathways" and "results chains" (2009, 27).
- Be transparent in communicating successes and drawbacks, strategies, reports and evaluations.

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP)

Homepage	www.reeep.org/
Year established	2002
Headquarters	Vienna, Austria
Function	Service provision/implementation
Funding	REEEP is funded by government contributions. As of 2012/2013, REEEP has received contributions of around €4.5 million (of which 3.8 million is earmarked). The largest contributors (as of 2013) are Germany, Norway, the UK, Switzerland and Ireland.
Reporting	A number of documents (audit reports and annual reports) are available from the project website; however, the latest full annual report is from 2009/2010.
Founding partners	Government of UK together with business and CSO partners. Margaret Beckett, then UK Minister for the Environment, announced the initiative to form REEEP at the summit's closing session.
Background	REEEP was launched as a public-private partnership at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). The United Kingdom was the initiator of the partnership and the main driving force in its functioning since the earliest stages. The preliminary arrangements for the founding of a new partnership in the renewable energy and energy efficiency sector were made in early 2002, with the UK and Indonesia and UNIDO as the first major partners. Nine other governments expressed their interest in the new initiative at this stage (among them Austria, India and Norway – key governmental partners today); fourteen others were invited. Efforts were made to acquire several important partners from the private sector, including businesses (e.g., Shell, IT Power, UK Business Council on Sustainable Energy, BP) and CSOs (WWF, Greenpeace) as well as IOs (ASEAN, UNEP, IEA). The initial provisions expected \$500,000 of UK funding for the temporary coordinating secretariat, to be supported by other donors at later stages. From January 2003 until May 2004, REEEP was hosted within the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office. In June 2004, REEEP obtained formal, legal non-profit status as a non-governmental organisation under Austrian law. In the ten years since its inception, the organisation has grown to comprise 385 partner organisations – including 45 governments as well as a range of private companies and international organisations. REEEP is a market catalyst for clean energy in developing countries and emerging markets. In this role, it acts as a funder, information provider and connector for up-scaling clean energy business models.
Results	As of 2014, REEEP has supported more than 180 clean energy projects in 58 countries, disbursing €18.6 million and leveraging an additional €36.3 million in co-funding. In its 9th funding cycle, REEEP has awarded €3.95 million to 28 clean energy projects in 19 countries. The 10th cycle is currently in preparation.
Analysis	<p>A number of studies (Szulecki, Pattberg and Biermann 2011; Pattberg et al. 2010) have scrutinised REEEP's success and reported four decisive factors: institutional design, the high level of trust and commitment, the monitoring and verification scheme and networking with other partnerships.</p> <p>REEEP's organisational structure including governance and decision-making has been referred to as an important prerequisite for success. REEEP's main governance bodies are the Governing Board (minimum of six members, broadly representative of key stakeholders and respecting regional variation), the Finance Committee (representing all REEEP donors above an annual contribution of €70,000), the Programme Board (consisting of regional renewable and energy efficiency experts and donors and deciding on the programme priorities), the Steering Committee (representing regional stakeholders), the International Secretariat (headquartered in Vienna with a staff of 11) and the Regional Secretariats (acting in six regions, contractually bound to provide local support to REEEP).</p> <p>A second important success factor is the high level of support (in particular in the start-up phase) of a dedicated government (in this case, the UK) that committed concrete resources (both human and financial) to the project (Pattberg et al. 2009).</p> <p>Thirdly, REEEP has developed a tight monitoring mechanism that guarantees that project funding is spent responsibly and with the greatest possible effect. All projects need to submit quarterly reports containing outputs, impacts as well as detailing the timings, risks approach and media activity for each project alongside a financial review. These reports are reviewed and recommended by Regional Secretariats and sent to the International Secretariat, which makes a decision regarding acceptance of progress and payments. When a project is completed, a final report on the whole initiative and finances is submitted, often prepared with the help of external experts and auditors. After a set period of time, a general impact assessment is conducted to examine the value of the project and its contribution to the more general goals (climate change mitigation, MDGs, future replication and regional scaling-up).</p> <p>Fourthly, REEEP has been successfully establishing working relations with other organisations and partnerships in the field, effectively setting up a feasible division of labour and sharing of resources. Important partner organisations are REN21, the Global Village Energy Partnership (GVEP) and the Global Network on Energy for Sustainable Development (GNESD). A concrete example for effective resource sharing is the clean energy info portal REEGLE that is jointly produced by REN21 and REEEP (see: www.reegle.info/).</p>

Outlook: The Ladder of Partnership Activity

To evaluate partnerships and guide behavior, Glasbergen has proposed a Ladder of Partnership Activity representing an idealised model of the entire partnership process (2011). It is a heuristic tool to assess where challenges and opportunities arise as the partnership develops and changes due to internal and external influence. The ladder consists of five steps organised along an X-axis representing changes in the methodology of the partnership from T1 to T2, and a Y-axis representing the internal and external dynamics of the partnership. The first step is exploratory and relates to trust building between the members of the partnership. The second is formation where a comparative advantage in problem-solving is created vis-à-vis other modes of governance and members formulate their own costs and benefits for collaborating. The third is rule and norm formation measured by the outputs of the partnership. The fourth is implementation and relates to the outcomes of the partnership. Finally, both the intended and unintended impacts of the partnerships are envisaged by “changing the political order”.



As time goes, the partnership moves from a focus on the members of the partnerships and their interactions to external interactions with the target and issue area. While each step of the ladder can be analysed in their isolation, it is important to note that there is action and interaction along the way. The trust building carried out in the first step and the collaborative advantages developed in the second step, are likely to change along with the methodology used in the partnership which in turn changes the costs and benefits for each member to collaborate. It is therefore important to continuously engage in trust building and monitor and evaluate the progress of the partnership to make enable adaptation to new circumstances.

Source: Glasbergen, P. (2011) Understanding partnerships for sustainable development analytically: the ladder of partnership activity as a methodological tool Environmental Policy and Governance, Vol. 21, Issue 1, pages 1-13

Context

Meta-governance

Partnerships are an indication of an emerging property of global governance, namely fragmentation, which is characterised by uncoordinated and non-hierarchical institutional arrangements, often leading to overlap and competition among initiatives within one and the same issue area. Without coordination, fragmentation could lead to inefficiencies, redundancies and a seemingly large governance landscape, but with little real impact. To deal with fragmentation, we need to have a framework for meta-governance, i.e., “the organisation of self-organisation” or “regulation of self-regulation” (Derx and Glasbergen 2014). There are also normative arguments for increased scrutiny of partnerships as an instrument. As Martens claims: “If global partnerships are not to stand in the way of a democratic multilateralism, they need clearly to fulfil criteria that ensure that the long-term interests of the public are not damaged by the particular partnership initiative.” (2007, 8).

Moreover, meta-governance for partnerships was recently brought up in a special session at the UNGA on partnerships’ role in implementing the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). One of the key conclusions echoed much of what research has previously shown, namely that: “Partnerships need to be vetted *ex ante* against criteria to determine fitness for purpose in pursuit of the post-2015 goals. Such criteria should consider human rights record, capacity to deliver, acts of corruption, financial transparency and compliance with taxation, and other conflicts of interest antithetical to universal norms and principles.” (UN 2014c). The discussions also touched upon the need for an institutional home for this vetting process by arguing that: “A facility is needed to safeguard concerns and to examine the growing corporate influence over human development.” (UN 2014c).

Witte, Streck and Brenner argue that three things should be accomplished to improve the workings of the Type II partnerships: first, ensure coherence between the processes and outcomes of the multilateral negotiations; second, establish ground rules for partnerships to foster accountability, capacity building and evaluation; and third, put a mechanism for monitoring, evaluation and learning in place (2003). The Type II partnerships entirely lacked these types of procedures and the partnership unit at the Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) was never entrusted with appropriate screening, reviewing or monitoring authority (Mert and Chan 2012). The so-called Bali Guidelines² provided to assess the partnerships were too weak and were never backed up with the appropriate resources at the DSD secretariat or stringency in terms of reporting requirements (Bäckstrand and Kylsäter 2014).

Consequently, research on the meta-governance of partnerships for sustainable development highlights two important aspects. First, partnerships should be checked against a number of criteria to determine their conduciveness to, for example, the SDGs and other international policy goals. Second, there should be an institution in charge of the vetting process that holds more power than the DSD.

2 http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/dsd/dsd_aofw_par/par_critguid.shtml

The following recommendations can be made:

- Partnerships should be checked against a number of minimum criteria for their conduciveness to the SDGs.
- Map the governance architecture in which the partnership is established.
- Explore opportunities, establish contact and build alliances with other partnerships, organisations and institutions working with related problems.

Political and social context

Most issue areas in contemporary world politics are already densely populated by governance arrangements. Together with international, national and local institutional frameworks, partnerships often add to a dense patchwork of existing institutions. Consequently, partnerships are embedded in a political and social context that will influence their chances to thrive. For example, Beisheim and Liese highlight the difficulty of operating in areas lacking the basic skeleton for governance such as rule of law or anti-corruption policies (2014). Hence, the political and social context is identified as a major factor determining the outcome of a partnership and consequently has to be taken into consideration already in the start-up phase.

The political and social context is particularly important at two levels. First, the political and social context is relevant at the level of the actual governance architecture, where partnerships are situated among other global, international and transnational institutional arrangements (e.g., multi-lateral environmental agreements and other partnerships). Building on Visseren-Hamakers and colleagues, we note that partnerships can have three functions vis-à-vis the wider governance architecture: if functions are filled that support multilateral regimes, they are complementary; if functions are filled that used to be carried out by governments, they erode public authority; and if functions are fulfilled in a new manner, they reinvent politics (Visseren-Hamakers, Leroy, and Glasbergen 2012).

Second, service-providing partnerships with local level implementation are dependent on local conditions. This can be used to the benefits of the partnership. Best practices from multi-stakeholder partnerships in developing countries show the importance of learning and building on local institutional and governance structures when delivering common goods. It has also been shown that institutional capacity building was needed, in particular in countries with a violent past (Stringer et al. 2014). In the case of GPEI, one analysis argues that partnerships should take the local health systems into account when setting targets and creating projects and preferably strengthen these systems (Aylward et al. 2003). On the other hand, including the right partners but also communicating with the target audience is important. In 2006, GPEI suddenly suffered from a large break in trust from the local communities in northern Nigeria who believed that the vaccine could make you sterile. Consequently, the entire programme had to be put on hold for nearly 12 months, creating a new polio outbreak in places far beyond the affected region (Aylward and Tangermann 2011). Working with local traditional and religious leaders, the trust was regained and the activities of the partnership could continue.

The following recommendations can be made:

- Map the governance architecture in which the partnership is established.
- Identify the 'Achilles heels' of the strategies for implementation and develop contingency plans to deal with these situations.
- When needed, engage in capacity building to create the necessary institutional conditions for implementation, taking into account local conditions.

Problem structure

A final intervening variable that determines the likelihood of a successful partnership is the structure of the problem at hand. A range of researchers have argued that 'malign problems' characterised by high levels of complexity, competing interests and unclear solutions are less likely to be solved than 'benign problems' where actors' interests and preferences converge and solutions are easier to identify (see e.g., Miles et al. 2001). It is thus important to control for problem structure when measuring the success of a partnership. In addition, when designing a partnership, it is therefore important to recognise that every problem has distinct features with specific administrative problems and political constituencies and thus requires different institutional setups (Abbott 2012; Keohane and Victor 2011).

Problem structure may, however, be malleable. Scientific discovery might reduce uncertainties in what measures that would be appropriate and thereby assist in building a business case for addressing a policy issue. In the case of GEPI, for example, the increased certainty and demonstration that polio was both a threat to nations but eradicable, is likely to have been conducive to the successes of the partnership (Shiffman, Beer, and Wu 2002).

The following recommendation can be made:

- Analyse problem structure to identify clear and measurable goals for the partnerships.

German Food Partnership (GFP)

Homepage	http://germanfoodpartnership.com/
Year established	2012
Headquarters	www.germanfoodpartnership.de/
Function	Implementation
Funding	Funding for the secretariat (hosted by the German Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, GIZ) is provided by the BMZ. Specific funding is available from the Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft mbH (DEG).
Reporting	No information on reporting is provided.
Founding partners	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and a group of German businesses and associations. In-kind or in-cash contributions by participating companies.
Background	The German Food Partnership is a network of government agencies and international businesses from the agriculture and food industry sector (with participation from CSOs and science) to promote food and nutrition security in developing countries and emerging economies. The overall aim of GFP is to improve food and nutrition security by increasing the quality or quantity of food. Concrete projects focus on market needs or existing bottlenecks for the provision of food. The GFP has developed out of concerns about how to address the food related MDGs in the context of German development policy.
Results	The GFP is a rather new initiative that has only recently started to implement concrete local projects. Four broader topics (related to broader international initiatives) can be identified: GFP oilseeds, GFP African Potatoes, GFP Rice Asia and GFP Rice Africa. Due to many projects still being in the planning phase, concrete results are scarce. Observable are a number of planning workshops to define concrete project goals and to get partners at one table.
Analysis	<p>The GFP displays a number of important features related to the building blocks discussed above.</p> <p>First, concrete criteria for membership have been developed to ensure a focus and long-term commitment to sustainable development. Participating private companies, associations, development banks and foundations active in the food sector must regard sustainable development as a long-term commitment. Engagement in partner countries needs to be long-term and go beyond identifying suppliers and customers. Projects are gender-sensitive.</p> <p>Secondly, next to these requirements for membership, participating business organisations also have to comply with UN Global Compact Principles and the BMZ criteria for private sector cooperation.</p> <p>Thirdly, each project must address seven issues (in the broader normative context of a global right to food): access to land, sustainable investments, access to genetic resources, sustainable production and processing, food safety, nutrition security and empowerment and participation for farmers (and their interest organisations). This broad and holistic approach is a very good example of how partnerships, by bringing in the appropriate partners, can move beyond the silo approach and come to a more system-oriented perspective.</p> <p>Fourthly, the GFP requires sound monitoring practices and reporting for each project. Concrete indicators shall be developed by the project participants (usually a German development agency and a minimum of two companies across multiple countries). Indicators are also envisaged to be aligned with national development strategies of the implementation countries.</p> <p>Finally, GFP has identified concrete roles and responsibilities for each type of partner, which makes the management of expectations easier.</p>

Prioritising building blocks

A clear lesson learned from years of research on public-private partnerships is that there is no 'one-size fits all' solution to designing successful interventions. Besides practical boundary conditions such as financial and human resources, the envisaged function and membership constellation of the partnership influence what factors should be taken into consideration when designing a partnership. Witte, Streck and Brenner, for example, argue that an equal representation of stakeholders may be important when a partnership is intended to negotiate and set global standards and norms, but less important if it has a coordinating function (Witte, Streck, and Benner 2003, 66). Moreover, several authors highlight the observation that partnerships often transform over time and change functions, goals and membership constellations. Consequently, it is important not to design all partnerships according to a pre-set template, but rather to explore its envisaged functions and then determine what the most appropriate structure is.

A key observation made in this study is that the degree of importance of each building block depends on the type of partnership (Liese and Beisheim 2011; Witte, Streck, and Benner 2003). This is highly useful knowledge when choosing where to allocate scarce resources in setting up and running a partnership. Fortunately, research is able to facilitate the prioritisation process of resources. The following overview provides a number of important recommendations for allocating resources in the process of partnership building.

Leadership is important for all types of partnership; however, different partnership types may require different types of leadership. While entrepreneurial leadership and convening power are important in the start-up phase across the board, intellectual leadership could prove more important in knowledge transfer partnerships.

Partner selection (procedures for selecting and including members) is particularly important for standard setting and service provision and implementation partnerships. For service provision and implementation partnerships, which are often highly demanding in terms of human and financial resources, it is essential to find a good division of labour among partners to avoid overlaps. For standard setting partnerships, success is based on uptake (and compliance) among their target group, which is enhanced by legitimacy (Liese and Beisheim 2011, 116).

Goal setting (including the ambition level and precision and stringency of targets) is particularly important for service providing/implementation and standard setting partnerships. A service providing partnership requires more financial and human resources, which in turn increases the incentives for free-riding behaviour among the partners since the potential gains are high (Beisheim and Liese 2014). Consequently, a high level of institutionalisation with precise rules is needed to mitigate the risk of free riders and establish trust among the collaborating members.

Funding is particularly important for service provision and implementation partnerships. These are generally very costly endeavours compared to the other three types and require substantial financial and human resources to function well. It is therefore considered particularly important to invest time and thinking into finding funding mechanisms that attract sufficient resources over time while being resistant to changes in the funding base.

Management and monitoring, reporting, evaluation and learning are considered important success factors across the board. Any type of partnership is smart to allocate adequate resources to these building blocks.

Meta-governance is most important where a partnership can benefit from coordination with other partnerships and initiatives. The largest synergies are found where the costs are the highest, hence in particular, service providing/implementation partnerships with high operational costs could make use of engaging in meta-governance initiatives.

Problem structure is clearly something every partnership will have to consider; however, it appears to be less of a determining building block for knowledge transfer partnerships.

Political and social context, i.e., the state of local and national capacities and conditions, existing laws and regulations or other institutional frameworks, is mainly relevant in situations where local implementation is involved (service providing/implementation partnerships).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Multi-stakeholder partnerships have become central implementation mechanisms for reaching global sustainable development goals. Their status has been (re)affirmed at every large multilateral conference on sustainable development over the past 25 years – from the Earth Summit in 1992 to the 2002 WSSD and Rio+20 and multiple conferences on aid effectiveness. During the ongoing discussions on a post-2015 development agenda, multi-stakeholder partnerships are as present as ever. Their prominence forces stakeholders from governments, CSOs and companies to consider their position vis-à-vis partnerships.

A key challenge is to increase partnership effectiveness and legitimacy, which have been limited to date. There are, however, also examples of highly effective multi-stakeholder partnerships such as the large health initiatives GAVI and GPEI, which have had huge positive impacts on global immunisation and eradication of common diseases, or the EITI, which has enhanced national legislation on extractive industries practices.

Based on over 15 years of research, we have drawn lessons from both success and failure cases for designing and implementing multi-stakeholder partnerships. Based on a literature review and input from practitioners and experts, we have identified nine building blocks necessary for creating successful multi-stakeholder partnerships.

We are confident that partnerships have the potential to be effective. Since multi-stakeholder partnerships are often costly endeavours, both in terms of resources and opportunity costs, the building blocks could assist stakeholders with limited funds and staff (such as CSOs) by presenting a checklist of what to expect from their partners prior to entering an agreement. The following guiding questions will assist stakeholders in their decision as to whether to engage in multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Leadership

- Is there sufficient leadership available that promises an inclusive and transparent process, fair and effective conflict-resolution, the ability to consolidate divergent views and create trust among partners?

Partners

- Is the inclusion of partners based on a satisfactory analysis of who to involve?
- Are the included partners genuinely committed to the goals and vision of the partners?
- Are there key players that are excluded or even opposing the partnership?

Goal setting

- Is there sufficient time and effort given to generate a common vision, goal and commitment among the partners?
- Are goals formulated in a specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed way?
- Do they lend themselves to third-party verification?
- Are the goals supporting global norms on sustainable development?

Funding

- Is there a sufficient amount of seed funding to kick-start the process?
- Are there mechanisms in place to ensure a sustained flow of financial resources to reach the goals of the partnership?

Management

- Is there a professional and independent bureaucracy in place to handle day-to-day business?
- Does the management structure enable a lean and efficient process with the capability to adapt to new challenges?

Monitoring, reporting, evaluation and learning

- Is there a regular, independent and transparent monitoring and reporting framework envisaged that allows all stakeholders to have access to the same type of information and assess the progress and problems of the partnership?
- Are regular, independent and transparent evaluation practices envisaged that allow stakeholders to assess levels of effectiveness and identify points for improvement?

Meta-governance

- Are the partnership's goals and procedures in line with internationally agreed goals and norms (such as the MDG's or SDG's)?

Social and Political Context

- Are social and political contexts sufficiently taken into consideration in the design of implementing measures?
- Are there contingency plans for how to deal with new challenges and unforeseen problems in implementation in different contexts?

Problem structure

- Does the problem lend itself to be addressed by a multi-stakeholder partnership and do the measures, goals and vision fit the challenges ahead?
- Are the partners open for new framings of a problem and is there a common understanding of what the drivers and solutions are to reach the goals?

Considering these guiding questions should increase the likelihood of setting up a successful multi-stakeholder partnership. Moreover, depending on both the maturity and type of multi-stakeholder partnership, the nine building blocks can add even more specific guidance for stakeholders.

First, from a chronological perspective, before starting a partnership, sufficient time and resources should be invested in formulating common goals, ambitions and visions, identifying and attracting the relevant partners and setting up mechanisms for dealing with dispute settlement among the partners. Once these preconditions have been met, the partners must ensure effective management, allocate adequate resources for process management and devise smart funding structures to ensure a sustained flow of resources. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation are key parts of the procedure to create internal and external legitimacy, showcase successful implementation and identify and learn from mistakes. Throughout the entire process, the partnership must adapt to a changing environment and social and political context. Leadership is a central element during the entire partnership process (to guide behaviour, create momentum and consolidate diverging interests). However, once the partnership has been launched and management practices are in place, it is an iterative rather than a linear process.

Second, the findings of this report suggest that it is important to consider the envisaged function of a partnership. By and large, service providing partnerships, such as GAVI, GPEI, and REEEP, demand larger financial and human resources and more knowledge about political and social contexts than knowledge transfer and standard setting partnerships, since implementing the former on the ground is highly resource intensive.

Finally, the global community needs to engage in proper meta-governance (i.e., institutional oversight) of multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development. This is essential to improve the credibility and effectiveness of the entire UN approach to the SDGs. For instance, a main conclusion from the evaluation of the WSSD's Type II partnerships has been that the policy officers managing the registry created to monitor all the initiatives lacked the mandate, authority and criteria to ensure that only partnerships with a clear and substantial contribution to the MDGs were designated as 'partnerships for sustainable development'. The result was a surprisingly large amount of 'empty shells', where an initiative was launched under great pomp and circumstance only to dissipate into oblivion a few years later. This is not only bad news for the effectiveness and overall performance of multi-stakeholder partnerships, but also to the legitimacy and trust-worthiness of the UN brand. Therefore, meta-governance is urgently needed to develop safeguards that would avoid repeating the mistakes made with the Type II partnerships. One approach would be to further develop the nine building blocks into minimum criteria for being considered as a partnership for sustainable development, for instance, a clear and measurable contribution to the future SDGs.

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