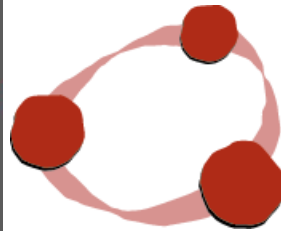


Maria Hayes



Partnership Brokers: Helping us to Partner Better

Ros Tennyson



the
partnering
initiative

2002-2009

[My partnering pedigree]



PARTNERSHIP
BROKERS ASSOCIATION

LEARNING • TRAINING • TRANSFORMING

(2003) + 2012 - PRESENT



Promoting Effective Partnering

2015 - PRESENT



A session in 3 parts:

1. Introduction: Some general observations on partnering
2. What is partnership brokering and how can it help ensure better partnering?

Discussion / Challenge / Q&A

2. What is the role of partnership brokers in monitoring and evaluating partnerships

Discussion / Challenge / Q&A



Introduction

Some general observations on
partnering



PROCESS matters

(Partnerships that ignore process and that focus entirely on projects are likely to be less sustainable and less transformational)



**SUSTAINING
OUTCOMES**

Moving on

Scoping
needs &
options

Identifying
potential
partners

**SCOPING &
BUILDING**

Building
relationships

Scaling &
increasing
impact

The Partnering Cycle

Mapping
&
planning

Agreeing to partner

Revisiting
& revising

Governance
& structures

Reviewing
efficiency
& value

**REVIEWING &
REVISING**

Measuring
results

Delivering
projects

Deepening
engagement

**MANAGING &
MAINTAINING**

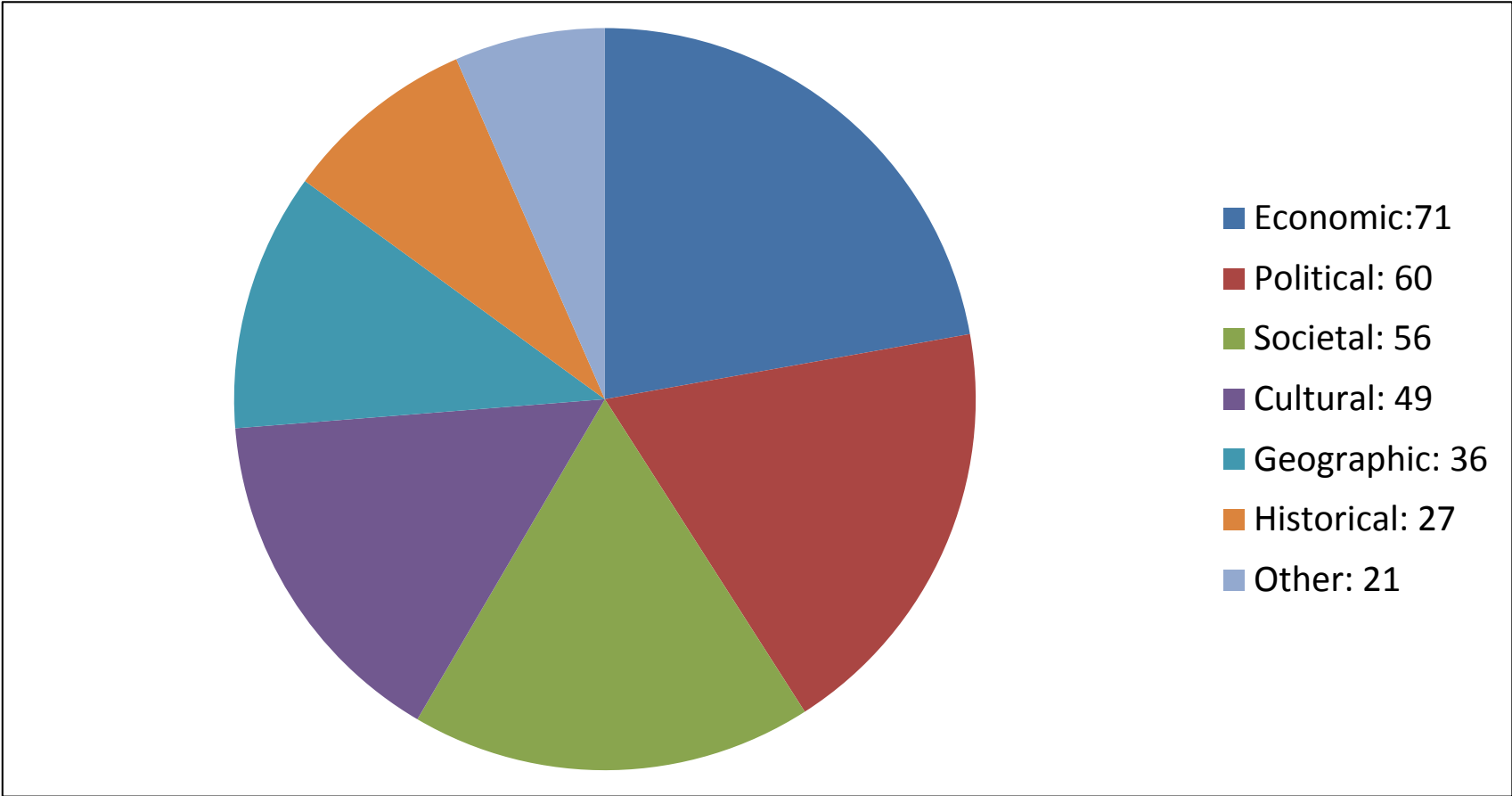
CONTEXT matters

(Partnerships are extraordinarily vulnerable to context and this is often overlooked in the focus on being 'global')



Contextual influences listed by importance

(as reported by partnership brokers working in a range of contexts)



PRINCIPLES matter

(But principles quickly become formulas so they may need to be reviewed and refreshed by every partnership)



Partnering principles in practice



Overcoming:

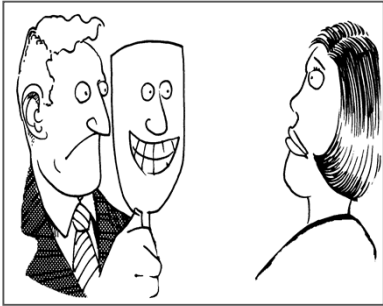
**POWER
IMBALANCE**

Will lead to:

EQUITY

But we might be better to focus on issues of:

CONTROL



**HIDDEN
AGENDAS**

**TRANSPARENCY
/ TRUST**

**“INTERIOR
CONDITION”**



COMPETITION

**MUTUAL
BENEFIT**

INTERDEPENDENCE



key
partnering
principles

From Gambia:

- Recognise informal partnerships are just as important as formal ones.
- Manage power imbalance especially in difficult contexts.
- Have respect for what everybody brings to the table
- Alignment of expectations



From Nepal:



- Politically neutrality – politics is consciously avoided
- Inclusivity (reaching out to the marginalised)
- Knowledge available to everyone
- Potential for up-scaling
- Fostering regional / cross-country cooperation
- Take account of different capabilities
- Enable more capable countries / players to help others

From Mauritius:

- A clear common goal/vision
- Someone good in the partnership brokering role
- A well developed / co-created agreement
- Conscious individuals



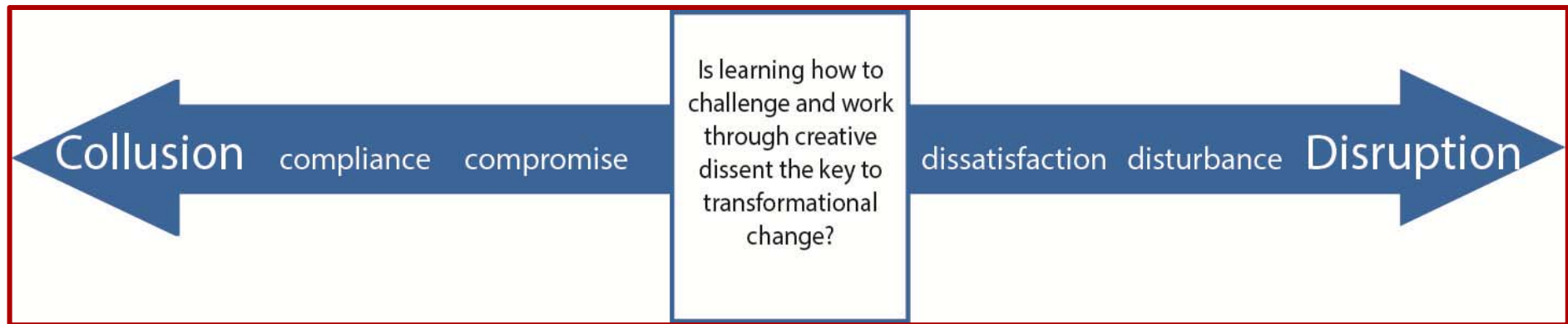
DONORS matter

(They can enable or constrain partnering effectiveness, innovation and impact – whether they are enabling or constraining is rarely discussed)



Issue of 'compliant' vs 'disruptive' partnerships

(partnership brokers suggest that a very high % of partnerships are essentially 'compliant')

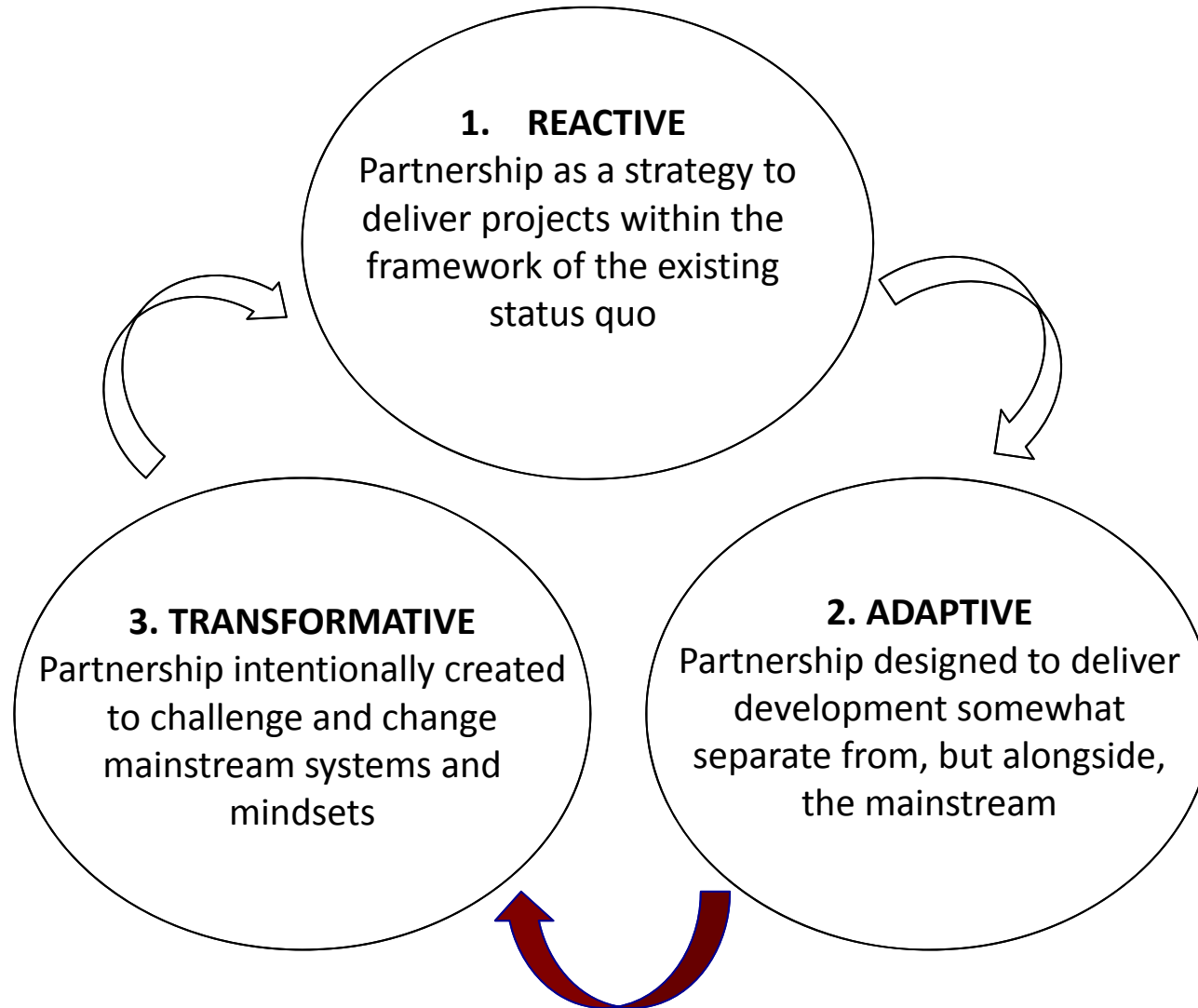


IMAGINATION matters

(In our commitment to due diligence, rigour, risk-containment, monitoring and evaluation etc. we lose focus / will / capacity to build on diversity and to partner in ways likely to transform)



Positioning partnerships



More need for partnership process management
aka partnership 'brokering'

What is
'partnership brokering'
and how can it help ensure
better partnering?



Attempting a definition

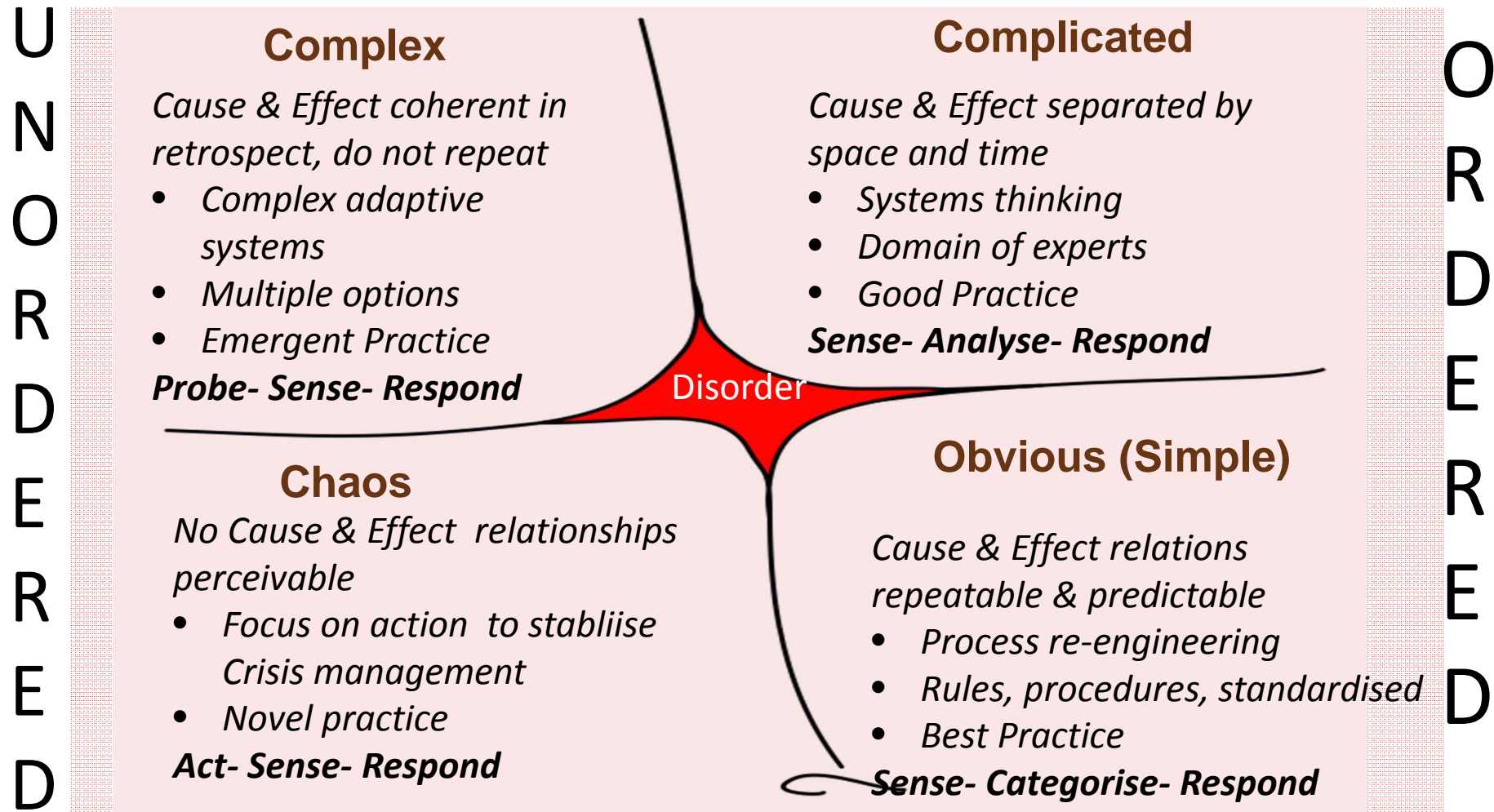
A **partnership broker** is an active ‘go-between’ who supports partners in navigating their partnering journey by helping them to create a map, plan their route, choose their mode of transport and change direction when necessary.

Partnership ‘broker’ is the term increasingly used internationally but it is problematic in certain contexts there are a number of alternative terms including:

‘**process manager**’ or ‘**change maker**’ or ‘**intermediary**’
or ‘**bridge-builder**’ or ‘**animator**’ or ‘**integrator**’
or ‘**connector**’ or ‘**servant leader**’ or ‘**boundary spanner**’...

**PARTNERSHIP BROKERS HELP PARTNERS
TO OPERATE IN COMPLEX SPACE**

Understanding 'complexity' (and its relevance to partnership brokering)



Partnership broker's relationship to the partnership

An **internal** partnership broker is an individual who helps to: prepare their organisation to be effective partners by negotiating partnerships and / or maintaining and managing a partnership arrangement and / or tracking the partnership's impacts.

An **external** partnership broker is an independent third party contracted to: scope, plan or facilitate the early stages of a partnership; develop a partnering agreement; research, maintain, monitor, review or evaluate a partnership over time.

There are advantages and disadvantages to both

10 tips for helping partners to create more transformational partnerships:

- **Develop a culture of reflection** as well as efficiency in every partnership (the best reflective practices lead to far greater efficiency)
- **Communicate** continuously, appropriately (for each partner) and imaginatively (to envision how things could be different)
- **Use real examples from elsewhere** – in the form of stories, dialogues, visits, case studies that share process – to inspire confidence and courage to partner bravely
- **Ask well-framed questions** as the key to unlocking potential (often better to bring the much-needed question rather than a pre-prepared answer)
- **Plan and make everything outcome / output and impact focussed** by creating and adapting (and, above all, explaining) genuinely fit for purpose tools
- **Build partners' partnering capacity and skills** (including the skills required to challenge and change 'business as usual' mind sets and empty protocols)
- **Encourage / support partners** to be available, direct, open and brave
- **Explore different / divergent views** (and don't 'smooth over') so that they can become triggers for innovation
- **Help partners hold the space** for ideas and solutions to emerge (don't force the pace or narrow the options too soon)
- **Be clear that partnering may not be the most suitable mechanism** for what is needed and be able and willing to sign-post to a constructive alternative

"This research breaks new ground in the sense that it seeks to personalise / personify thinking about partnership brokering and present it as a human process rather than an abstract, theoretical construct.

In this way, partnering (and partnership brokering specifically) contests 'business-as-usual' or, to be more precise, the 'command-and-control' approaches that dominate."

Reviewer writing about:

The Necessity of Transformation:

Emerging partnering lessons from diverse contexts



Promoting Effective Partnering

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**MANAGING &
MAINTAINING**

Partnership brokering roles at different stages in the partnering cycle

SUSTAINING OUTCOMES

Exploring moving on options and supporting decisions

Managing closure / moving on processes collaboratively

Helping partners celebrate and learn from their partnership 'story'

Ensuring outcomes are able to be sustained / embedded / scaled /transferred

REVIEWING & REVISING

Supporting partners in reviewing added value and effectiveness

Assisting in revising the collaboration agreement

Helping partners implement changes needed to improve the partnership

Guiding partners to plan for sustaining outcomes & moving on



SCOPING & BUILDING

Scoping the partnership's potential

Exploring drivers, expectations and underlying interests

Embedding principles of equity, transparency and mutual benefit

Enabling partners to differentiate between their partnership and its projects

Negotiating a detailed collaboration agreement to underpin the partnership

MANAGING & MAINTAINING

Co-creating appropriate governance arrangements

Helping partners to work through complex internal & external challenges

Building partner capacities to strengthen and optimise the partnership

Enabling partners to explore new ways of transforming systems



Those operating in this role can find themselves 'brokering' any or all of the following:

- **Ideas**, innovation and imaginative responses to intractable issues
- **Complex relationships** that cross sectoral, cultural and / or geographic boundaries
- **Opportunities** for building partnering capacity – in individuals, organisations and partnerships
- **Evolution** of new collaborative mechanisms and organisational models
- **New approaches** to reviewing partnering effectiveness and added value



Partnership brokers help partners / the partnership to achieve a 'balance' between:



*'art' & 'science' ... relationship & goals ...
service & leadership...action & reflection... etc.*



"My belief is that there are three forces always operating in the world: an activating force (that which is trying to happen); a restraining force (that which can help what is trying to happen by challenging it and making it more robust) and a reconciling force (that helps people to work with these two forces to create something new).

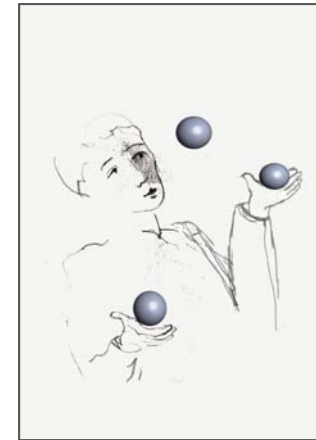
I think it is clear that a partnership broker works as a reconciling force, but what I recognise is that, in this role, I may also have to act as a restraining force and / or an activating force as well.

Knowing in which of these ways to act at any particular time is an art as well as a science."

Extract from a partnership broker's logbook
What do Partnership Brokers Do: An enquiry into Practice



Partnership brokers are often juggling contradictions



Supporting / serving	Shaping / directing
Disrupting	Consolidating
Working from intuitive insights	Working from logical deduction
Unaligned / neutral	Passionate / persistent
Building a level playing field	Promoting new leadership

Partnership brokers are often both:



Warriors and Worriers



"I have learned a lot about leadership in partnership brokering.

I have sometimes been required to push far ahead of the partners in exploring and creating opportunities that they cannot yet see as individuals or as organisations.

This has involved quite a lot of personal risk in that I needed to be visibly seeking, questioning and making mistakes.

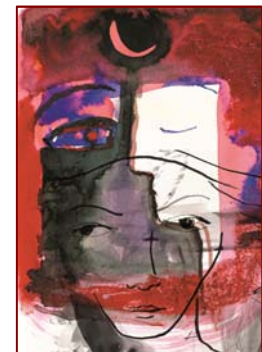
It feels as if, more than anything else, I have needed courage"





Discussion / Challenge / Q&A

Myths / Assumptions (about partnership brokering in theory)	Realities / Experience (from partnership brokering in practice)
Its all about people skills and relationship-building	It is far more about shaping direction and getting to action
Having a partnership broker wastes resources and detracts from project delivery	Not having a partnership broker can mean high risk of (potentially very costly) problems to sort out later
Partnership brokers work for agreement	Partnership brokers work for alignment
Partnerships brokers have a key role in managing conflict and smoothing over differences of view	Partnership brokers help partners to explore and innovate by building on diversity and differences
Partnership brokers are self-serving and perpetuate partner dependency for their own interests	Partnership brokers should work to a code of ethics in which the principle of making their role redundant is enshrined



What is the role of
partnership brokers in
monitoring and evaluating
partnerships?



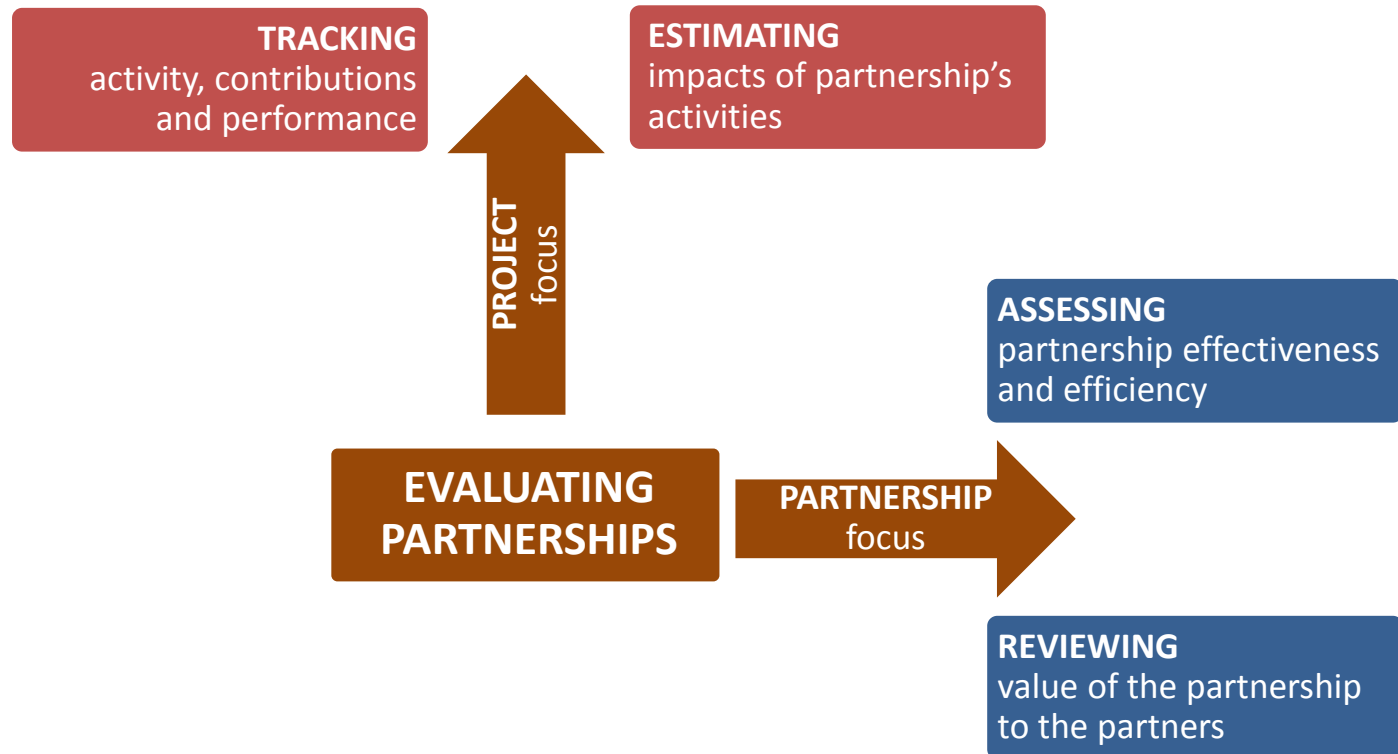
"I tried to bring out the meaning of a partnership and managed to help them explore the benefits where a fully functioning partnership are bigger than simply delivering a project. How the multi-stakeholder and cross-sector engagement could unleash untapped potential and nurture creativity and innovation.

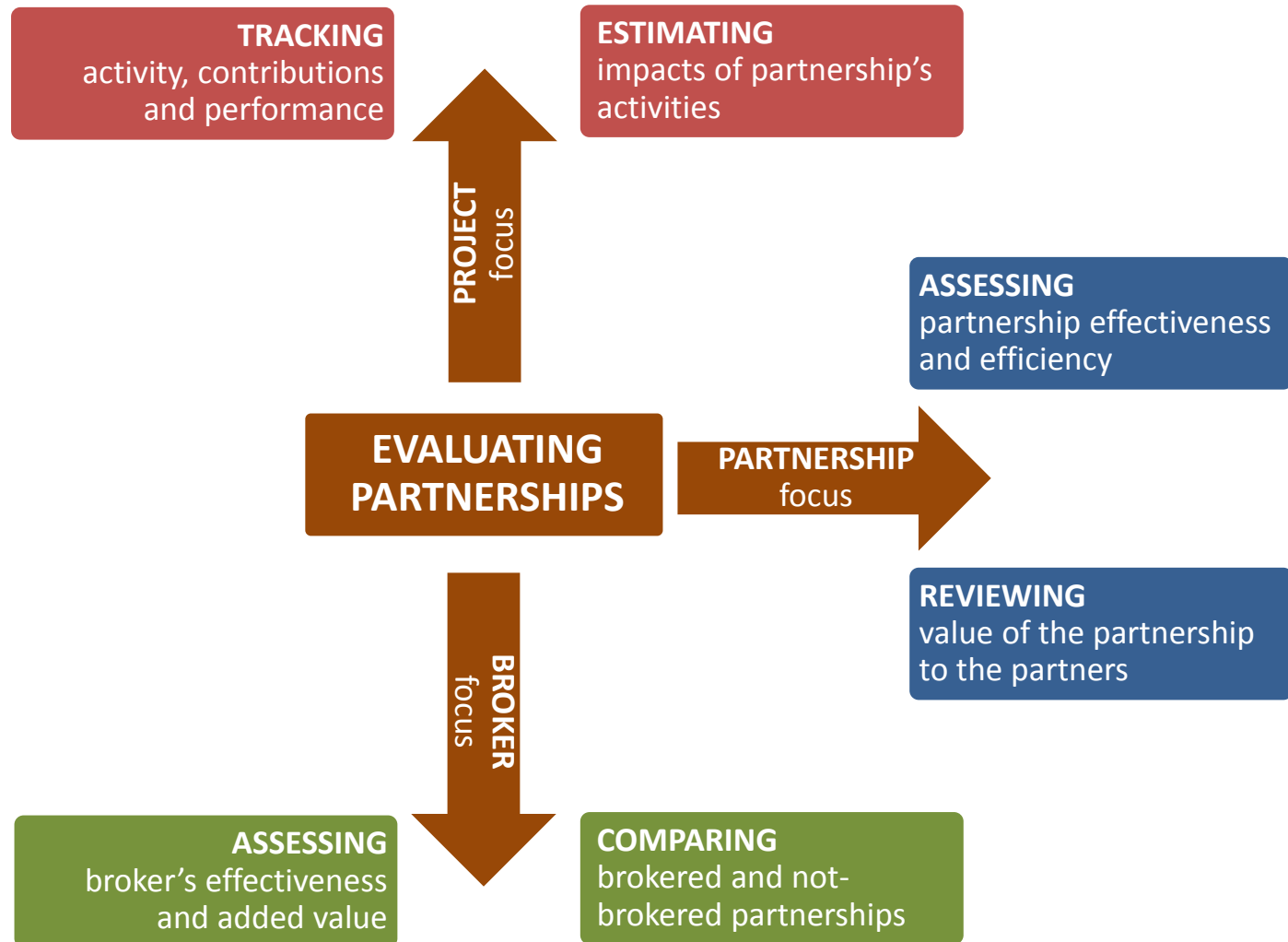
This enabled everyone to see a wider picture as opposed to the narrow focus on 'How many? How much?' that had characterised all the earlier interactions"

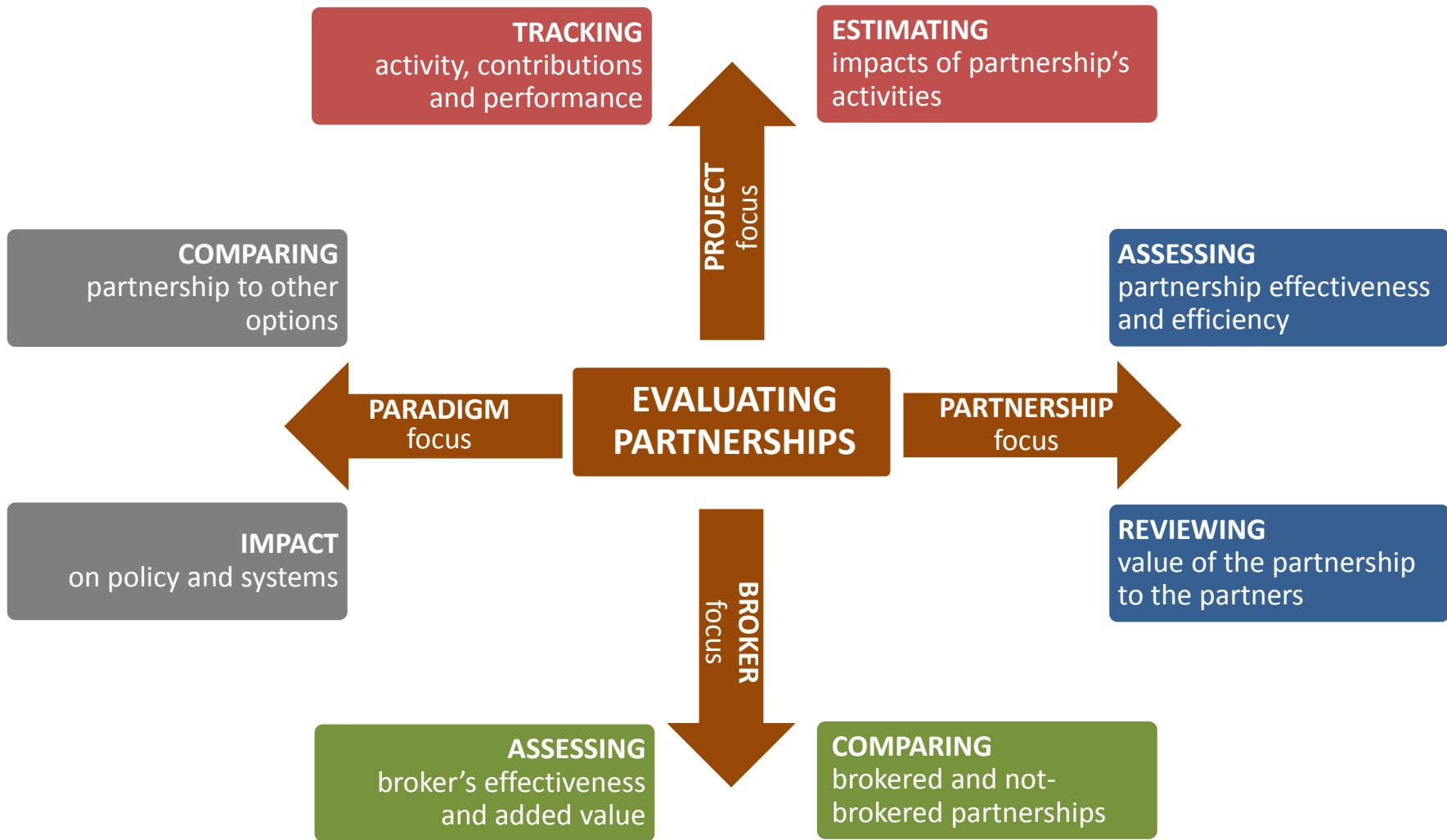


Extract from a partnership broker's logbook
What do Partnership Brokers Do: An enquiry into Practice

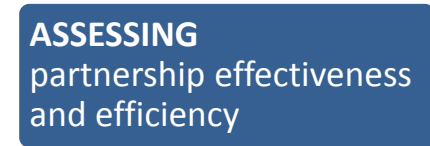








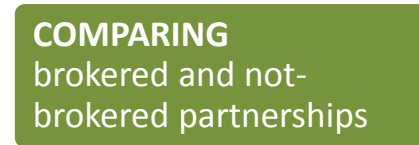
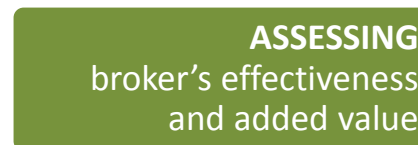
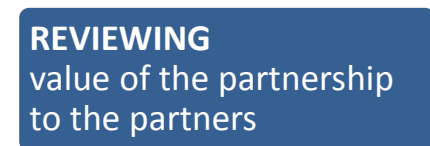
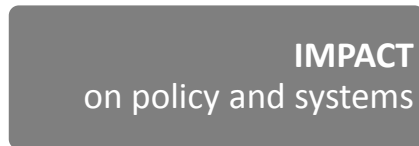
Partnership Broker as
ADVISOR



Partnership Broker as
ADVOCATE

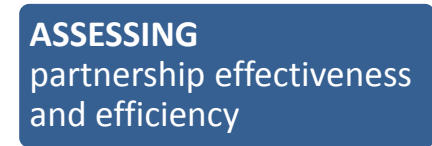


Partnership Broker as
FACILITATOR



Partnership Broker as
SUBJECT

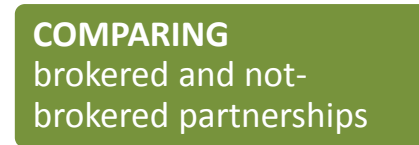
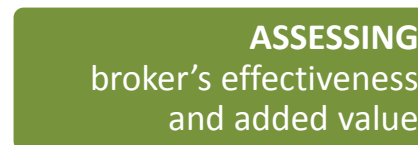
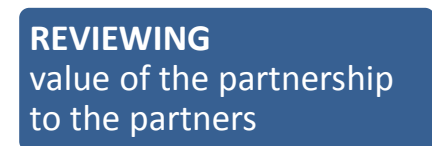
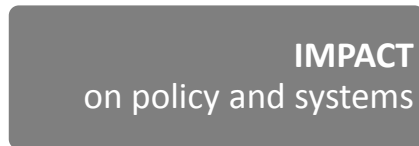
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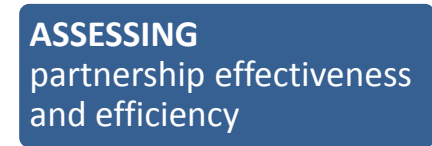


Partnership Broker as
FACILITATOR



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SUBJECT

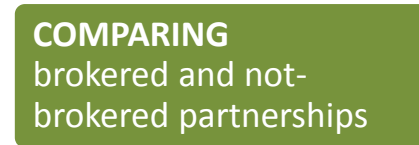
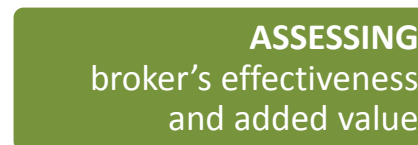
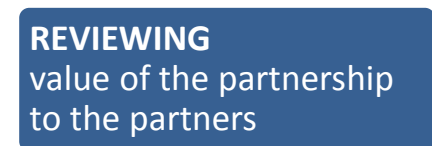
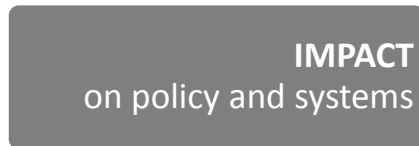
Partnership Broker as
ADVISOR



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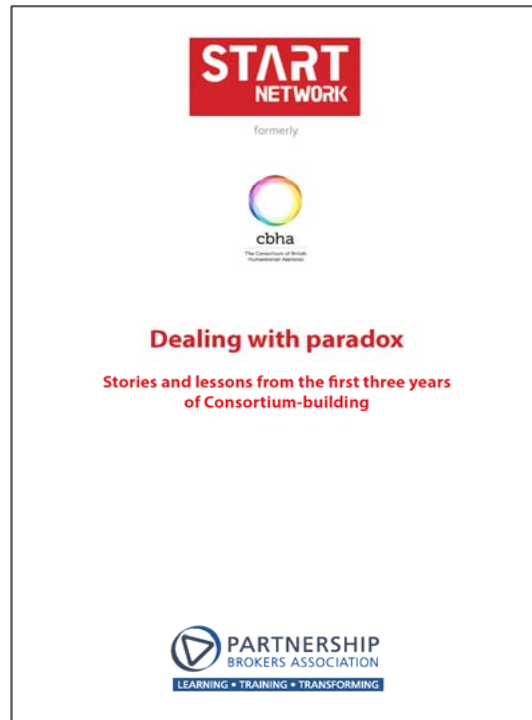


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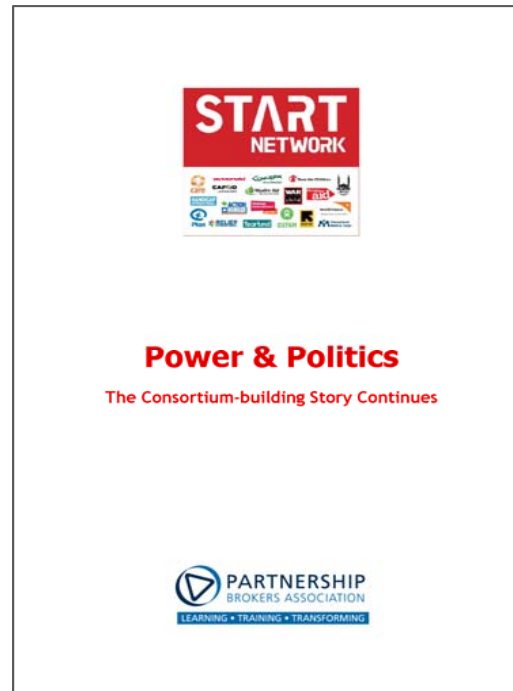


Partnership Broker as
SUBJECT

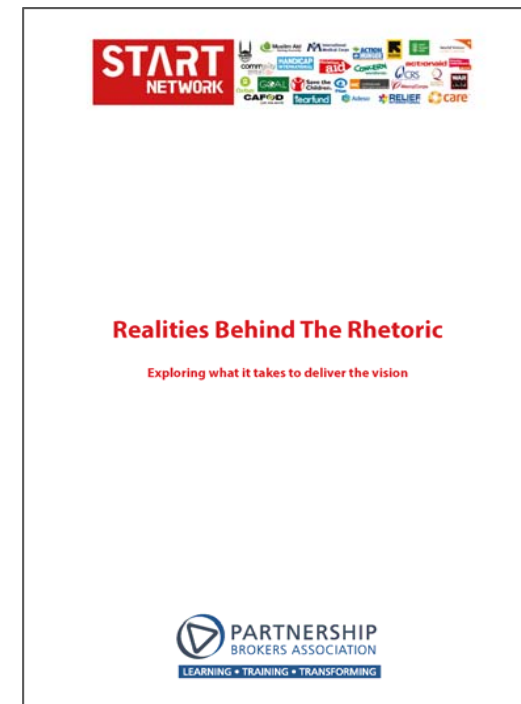
Partnership brokers as 'story tellers'



2011-2013



2014



2015

Start Network case study sequence

Collaboration Complexity



Insights and lessons from the Skills for Negotiation project
in two Self-Administered Zones in Burma / Myanmar



Canada

Funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development



Partnership brokers as
'participant observers'



The necessity of transformation

Emerging Partnership Lessons from Diverse Contexts



LEARNING • TRAINING • TRANSFORMING

PEP
Promoting Effective Partnering

Funding from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs
the Netherlands

Partnership brokers as 'informants'

Partnership brokers as 'subjects'



What do Partnership Brokers Do? An enquiry into practice

January 2012



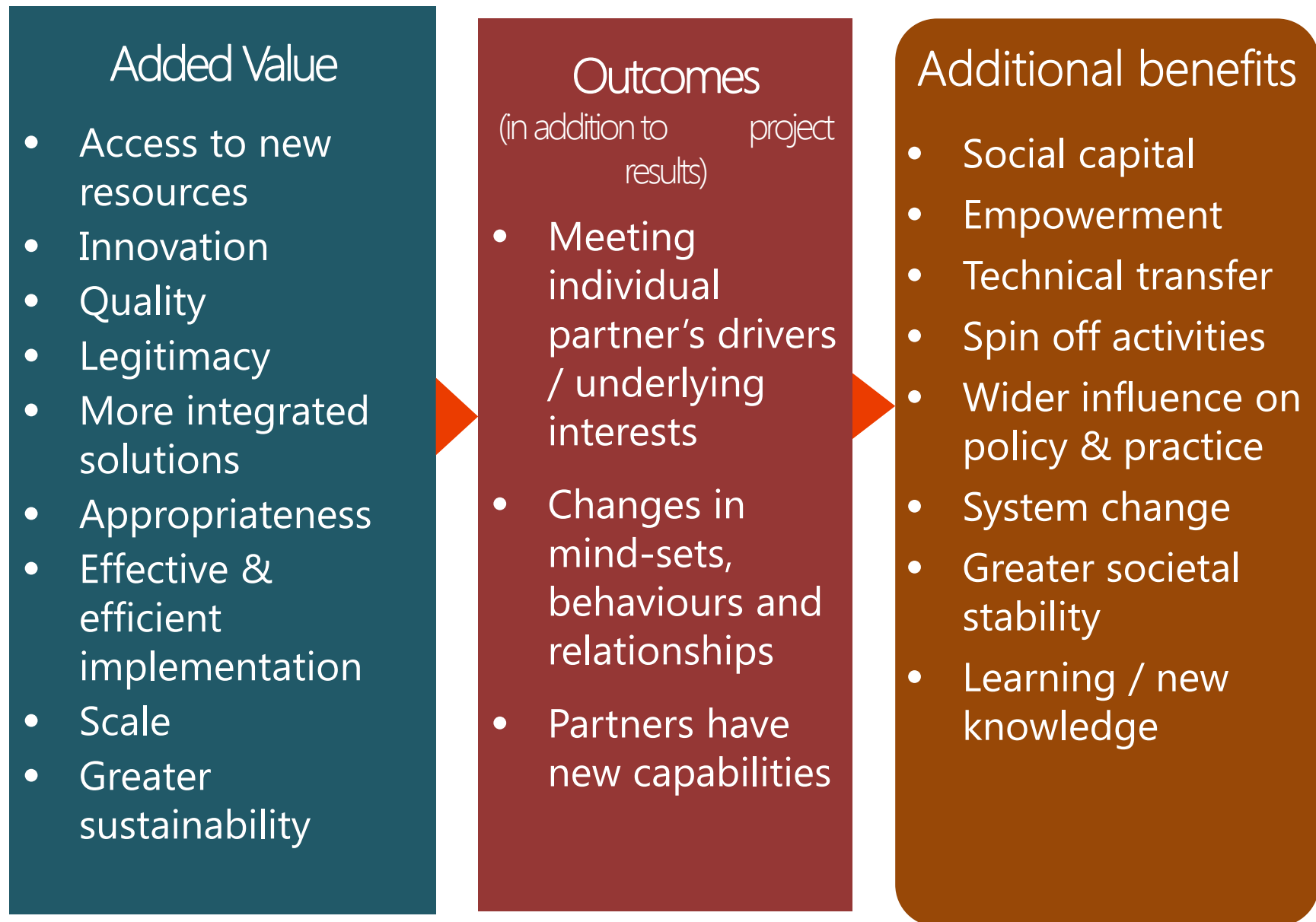
LEARNING • TRAINING • TRANSFORMING

Collaborative advantage is strongest when the collaboration:

1. Yields benefits that are more than just a 'deal' but creates **living systems that evolve progressively in their possibilities**. Beyond the immediate reasons for forming the relationship, collaboration offers those involved an option on the future by opening new doors and creating unforeseen opportunities
2. Creates **new value together** rather than simply getting something back for what you put in
3. Is not 'controlled' by formal systems but works from a **dense web of interpersonal connections and internal infrastructures** that enhance learning

Drawn from: Rosabeth Moss-Kanter
Collaborative Advantage: The Art of Alliances, Harvard Business Review

Partnerships brokers helping partners to ask: What constitutes 'value'?



Reviewing & Revising



Partnership brokering roles:

Supporting partners in reviewing added value and effectiveness

Assisting in revising collaboration agreement

Helping partners implement changes needed to improve the partnership

Guiding partners to plan for sustaining outcomes & moving on

Partnership brokering tasks can include:

- Agreeing and co-creating review procedures
- Drawing out lessons and capturing information
- Improving efficiency of the partnership
- Exploring added value to partners and unexpected benefits / outcomes
- Brainstorming new ideas /developments
- Making any necessary changes to project or partnering arrangements
- Agreeing what to put into the public domain and how

How does this approach add to our ability to understand and improve partnering?

What issues does this approach raise?

Anything else to explore?





Discussion / Challenge / Q&A



More information about partnership brokering and / or the Partnership Brokers Association please go to:

www.partnershipbrokers.org

Or for more discussion on partnership brokering or other partnering issues, contact me on:

ros@partnershipbrokers.org

