

# Five Key Things I Have Learned About Partnership Brokering:

over 20 years of professional practice in Canada, UK,  
Poland and other countries of Central and East Europe

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## 1. Introduction

In this paper, I present five key learnings or insights, which have informed my partnering work over the years and provided the basis for my growing self-awareness as a partnership broker. In presenting five key learnings, I am not seeking to be comprehensive, but rather to present insights which have made a difference to me and to my work as a partnership practitioner.<sup>1</sup>

In each case, I discuss the implications of my insight for the professional practice of partnership brokering and try to make generalizations that might be of value to other practitioners. I also describe the personal experience from my own professional practice, which provided the source of my learning or insight.

## 2. Cross-Sector Partnerships Are Social Institutions

Cross-sector partnerships, just as other social institutions, such as parliament, the university, the family, a business, the law and the economy are essential to the functioning of modern society. They are 'social' institutions because they depend on people operating in groups. This means that they have to be nurtured and lived. To be effective, social institutions depend on people engaging with each other voluntarily in a self-aware, purposeful and ongoing way.<sup>2</sup>

The important thing about social institutions is that they cannot be legislated into existence nor can they be constructed through slogans or ideological edicts. They result from people interacting with one another in groups. Arguably, society depends on the interplay between different groups, which constantly create and re-create social institutions. Cross-sector partnerships facilitate, encourage and otherwise make possible the interplay between the different groups that make society function in a specific situation or context.

### Implications For Partnership Brokering

Thinking of cross-sector partnerships as social institutions has practical implications for the Partnership Broker. The Broker needs to see himself as a social agent, who is engaged in the process building and rebuilding social institutions. This is because cross-sector partnerships focus on group formation and facilitating the interplay between groups. The process of group action is one that generates institutions and makes them effective.

To be effective, the Broker must work hard to ensure that all sectors are not just represented, but become actively engaged. Many partnerships fail, because they become dominated by one sector or group at the outset. In many situations, the group contracting or commissioning the work of the Broker will seek to limit the number of participants, so as to retain control, be it consciously or unconsciously. (e.g. 'we only have limited space in the project', 'we can't deal with translation', 'we don't have the funds', 'the project will become unmanageable', 'we don't know any sensible NGOs' ...).

To ensure there is institutional innovation, there must be an interplay between different groups. The Broker must ensure that different groups are engaged. The same logic applies to Internal Brokers. It's easy to generate arguments for not including representatives of other sectors in the partnership-building process (e.g. 'why should we pay for business?', 'they don't want to be involved anyway', 'they've never responded to our invitations', 'they just want our money'...). The Broker must be always keep trying to involve relevant groupings, who are 'discovered' as the partnership building process unfolds.

### Grand River Heritage

In my work at the Heritage Resources Centre in Canada in the 1980s, I learned just how important it is to keep inviting and informing groups who do not respond to invitations, but are nonetheless of

crucial importance to implementing partnership-based heritage conservation. In southern Ontario, this was the case with the Six Nations native groups and the Mennonites. Both controlled heritage resources along the Grand River Valley and so their involvement was crucial to the management of heritage resources. On principle, they refused to participate in workshops, seminars, negotiations and other activities focussed on improving landscape conservation, which were organized by our Centre.

My boss and mentor, Prof. J. Gordon Nelson, insisted that we persist in inviting these groups and continue to find ways of engaging with them. At the same time, our Centre opposed attempts of the Provincial Government to legislate and otherwise ‘force top-down’ solutions to heritage conservation along the Grand River Valley. We undertook a series of resource mapping studies, which enabled both the Mennonite and Six Nations groups to contribute (they still didn’t come to meetings). Over a period of 5 years in the late 1980s, our Centre engaged local and provincial government, business and other stakeholders, including the Grand River Water Authority, in a participative planning process.<sup>3</sup> The result was not only in adoption of a management plan for the Grand River Valley, but also designation of the river as a Canadian Heritage River (a federal government designation). The planning process led to the emergence of a new institution – the Grand River as a Canadian Heritage River – which enabled a constituency of an inclusive and wide range of public and private groups concerned with heritage conservation to interact as a group (a cross-sector partnership). Nearly two decades later, the constituency of Grand River stakeholders continues its work, mobilising concern and action for heritage conservation.

The Canadian Heritage River designation of the Grand River Valley is one of the best examples I know of a cross-sector partnership operating as a ‘social institution’. The insights of my Canadian experience as to the ‘social nature’ of partnerships and partnership-building and their role in creating and re-creating ‘social institutions’ has informed my partnership brokering work in subsequent years.

### **3. Cross-Sector Partnerships Change Culture**

Culture cannot be changed quickly. But culture can and must be changed, if we are to move to a more environmentally and socially sustainable society. By culture I refer to the habits, customs, values and ethics through which people relate to one another and which enable them to operate in larger groupings – such as business, voluntary organizations, political parties and government - that are now an essential part of modern life. Cross-sector partnerships can be effective tools for changing culture.

#### **Implications For Partnership Brokering**

For those concerned with sustainable development, cross-sector partnerships are only important to the extent that they change culture. To be effective in changing culture, the Broker needs to see partnerships and the partnership building process as a means of moving beyond ‘business as usual’ by identifying alternatives and ways of implementing them. This means being proactive in pushing for alternatives and for change rather than passively responding to the interplay between the partners engaged. The challenge is not just to get partners to engage with one another to pool their resources and risks in pursuit of a common goal, but to do so in ways that moves society towards sustainable development. The implication is that the partnership process itself is not an end in of itself, but rather a means to identifying and achieving sustainable development.

#### **Clean Business**

Poland’s economic and political reforms in the 1990s, following the Solidarity revolution and the fall of the Berlin Wall, sought to redress the damage to economy, society and environment suffered as a result of post-war communism. Under a central planning regime, subservient to the interests of the Soviet Union, totalitarian rule stifled enterprise and citizen action. The result was a dysfunctional

economy, a highly bureaucratic self-serving state and disenfranchised citizens. Empty shops and frustration were the order of the day. The move to market economy and democratic rule started with the first free elections held in 1989, which brought Poland its first Solidarity backed government. Economic and political reforms focused inter alia on establishing and nurturing a private sector. A programme of privatisation brought foreign capital, expertise and business to Poland. It also enabled the development of small business. By 1995, approx. 40% of the economy was in private hands and 2 million small and medium-sized enterprises had been established.

In 1996, I helped establish the Polish Environmental Partnership Foundation (PEPF) as an NGO committed to helping community groups operating at the local level to design and implement practical projects contributing to sustainable development.<sup>4</sup> The motivation was to introduce a culture of sustainable development in Poland rather than recreate the unsustainable western model. The PEPF founders were a group of US-based philanthropic foundations, including the German Marshall Fund of the US, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the C. S. Mott Foundation and the Trust for Mutual Understanding. They were committed to contributing to Poland's reforms by supporting financially, organizationally and substantively, the development of civil society. At the time, they were not much interested in working with business. In fact, they saw the role of civil society in Poland as one of contesting the excesses and negative aspects of big business and big government. As in the US, the role of civil society was to confront business and government rather than to cooperate with them in various ways. The primary aim of the PEPF was thus to provide financial and other types of support to small NGOs in order to make them stronger and more independent.

When I was asked to become the PEPF Executive Director, I knew that a way had to be found of engaging with Poland's emerging business sector, rather than confronting or contesting it. This was because – at the time – the reforms of economy and society were causing much dissarray and confusion as to the respective roles and responsibilities of the government, business and civil society sectors. With the goal of achieving sustainable development in mind, the opportunity was to try to define the roles of the 3 sectors in way that would be more effective than western model. A new Polish compact or consensus between business, government and civil society for ensuring Polish reforms aimed at sustainable development required finding ways of working across sectors.

My realization that business could be an opportunity for moving Poland towards sustainable development came through my interaction with the Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum (BLF) and the Prince himself starting in 1994. As a result, I introduced the idea that business could be a partner in the pursuit of sustainable development to the programming of the PEPF. In 1996, thanks to the BLF, I had the opportunity to start exploring possible joint work between the PEPF and BP, which had its Polish headquarters in Krakow and had been involved in some of my earlier work at the Krakow Development Forum. At the time, BP was not only a strong supporter of the BLF with a commitment to promoting environmental awareness, but a company embarking on large scale investment and business development programme in Poland.

Over a period of 2 years, PEPF-BP discussions focussed increasingly on identifying something practical that would help accelerate environmental awareness in Poland's economic reforms. We identified the link between small businesses and environmental concern as something that would provide the appropriate focus. The Clean Business Programme was born out of these discussions. The goal was to help create a new culture of environmental performance among Polish SMEs that would not only generate business benefits to the companies concerned through cost savings, but also contribute to the wider community by encouraging companies to become more directly involved in action for sustainable development. Clean Business was designed from the very outset as a cross-sector partnership, involving BP, the PEPF and Groundwork, a UK-based NGO which was operating a successful Business Environment scheme at the time. We negotiated a cooperation agreement. BP and the UK Government contributed funds. Groundwork contributed expertise and the PEPF and BP Poland took on the task of implementing the scheme in Poland.<sup>5</sup>

The programme has been highly successful and influential. Over 5,000 companies have benefited from the scheme and have subsequently become involved in working in partnerships with civil society groups and local government. But more importantly, after 8 years of operation, the basic idea that environmental performance is an integral part of day-to-day business activities (not an add-on) has

now become mainstream in Poland.

The Clean Business programme was the most ambitious (and most successful) cross-sector partnership in which I have been involved to date. I have been involved with the scheme for a decade and in that time, Clean Business has always been a reference or benchmark for my partnering work and demonstrated to me that cross-sector partnerships that are focussed and committed on a long term vision, can and do change culture.

## 4. Cross Sector Partnerships Generate Social Capital

According to Francis Fukuyama trust is the basis of prosperity and so holds the prospect of steering society towards sustainable development. In his book on trust,<sup>6</sup> Fukuyama defines trust as follows: “Trust is the expectation that arises within a community of regular, honest, and cooperative behaviour, based on commonly shared norms, on the part of other members of the community.”<sup>7</sup> He goes on to explain how trust is generated in society: “social capital is a capability that arises from the prevalence of trust in a society... it can be embodied in the smallest and most basic social group, the family, as well as the largest of all groups, the nation, and in all other groups in between. Social capital differs from other forms of human capital insofar as it is usually created and transmitted through cultural mechanisms like religion, tradition or historical habit.... Acquisition of social capital... requires habituation to the moral norms of a community and, in its context, the acquisition of virtues like loyalty, honesty and dependability. The group, moreover, has to adopt common norms as a whole before trust can become generalized among its members. In other words, social capital cannot be acquired simply by individuals acting on their own. It is based on the prevalence of social, rather than individual virtues.”<sup>8</sup>

Cross-sector partnerships are extremely effective in building social capital and so are mechanisms for generating trust in a group, between groups and ultimately in a nation. Social capital and trust are essential to building economic prosperity, rule of law and democratic practice. In situations, where social capital has been destroyed or degenerated and where trust no longer exists, economic, political and democratic reforms will be unlikely to succeed. We can think of many such situations, from the Middle East to Iraq to our urban areas. The rebuilding of social capital is a prerequisite for building a market economy and democratic society.

### Implications For Partnership Brokering

The important implication for partnership brokering lies in the fact that including civil society in cross-sector partnerships should bring with it a focus on values, norms and moral imperatives. For the Broker, a key concern relates to using the participation of civil society groups as a way of ensuring that the idea of trust is addressed explicitly in the process of partnership design, building and maintenance. Trust needs to be established in and through the partnership, if success is to be achieved. In fact in many situations, the accumulation of social capital may turn out to be the most and contribution of the partnership.

In successful partnerships, social capital and trust are taken for granted. In dysfunctional partnerships, the causes of failure are seldom seen in terms of a failure to accumulate social capital. Typically, failure is attributed to an inability to reconcile divergent or conflicting interests or agree on financial issues. Yet successful partnerships can and do accommodate conflicting interests of the partners involved. But only if they have succeeded in building up sufficient social capital to accommodate and deal with such conflicts.

An effective Broker is sensitive to issues of trust and appreciative of the role of cross-sector partnerships in generating social capital.

## Local Partnerships For Sustainable Development

The PEPF started out as a grantmaker, providing small grants to support civil society groups in their efforts to advance the cause of sustainable development. Its precursor in the years 1991-1995, was a programme of the German Marshall Fund of the US, focused on small grantmaking (i.e. grants averaging \$2,000) aimed at building an independent environmental NGO sector in Poland.<sup>9</sup> Established in 1996, the PEPF was faced with a demand for its funding and technical support from civil society groups across Poland. It became apparent at the very start that the PEPF as a small foundation with limited financial resources (an annual grant budget of approx. \$200,000), this demand could never be met. How then could the PEPF deliver on its mission to implement sustainable development at the local or community level throughout Poland? The answer was either to focus on the subnational level or to find a different formula for reaching out to civil society groups across the country. In both cases, it was clear the PEPF would have to move beyond its (then) established role and capability as a grantmaker for environmental NGOs.

To meet the challenge of reaching out in a systematic way to NGOs across Poland, the PEPF adopted the partnership approach as part of its “core business” and sought to work with local or community-based NGOs not as grant beneficiaries, but as local partners for programme delivery. To this end, the PEPF developed a series of programmatic themes, including Clean Business, Schools for Sustainable Development, Greenways. Each of these themes provided a focus for both the PEPF and its local NGO partners. The objective was to work together to mobilise resources and influence to make schools living examples of sustainable development (Schools for Sustainable Development), business more engaged in the community through environmental projects (Clean Business) and tourism development more sensitive to local heritage values and to generating community benefits (Greenways).<sup>10</sup>

By 2001, it was clear that many local or community-based initiatives started in one or other of the three thematic programmes had developed a life of their own. It was no longer possible or appropriate to manage them from the level of the PEPF as ‘local ownership’ was very strong. At the same time, it was apparent that resources were not well identified or used at the local level. There was too much emphasis on external support, especially financial support. A new approach was needed that would help build greater self-reliance and financial sustainability at the local or community level. Recognition of this situation led directly to initiating a national programme to build local cross-sector partnerships across Poland as delivery vehicles for sustainable development. The motivation was to imbue local communities with a ‘partnership culture’, which had become second nature to those at the PEPF.<sup>11</sup>

Initiated in 2001, the Local Partnerships for Sustainable Development programme has built a national network of 19 Local Partnerships, which bring together over 500 businesses, local governments and civil society groups.<sup>12</sup> The PEPF has taken on the role of secretariat for this network and is no longer its principal funder. Each Local Partnership has developed its own financial and operational formula, adopting common norms or standards as to procedures, transparency, openness and commitment to delivering sustainable development. What has been created is a mutual support network of individuals, organisations and places, which has been helping to shape the design and delivery of major EU-funded programmes based on the partnership model. The most important of these is the rural development programme LEADER, which has generated approx 120 Local Partnerships across the country. The PEPF’s network of Local Partnerships is helping to shape the LEADER and other related EU programmes in terms of increasing the effectiveness of delivery. PEPF efforts are having a national level impact.

For me, the national network of Local Partnerships for Sustainable Development has been a project focused explicitly on building social capital. The network has not been built up with promises of funding, but rather on the commitment of individuals and organizations to undertake practical action for sustainable development for the long term benefit of their communities. By moving beyond the ‘project-financing’ cycle, the Local Partnerships focus on accumulating social capital and generate the trust that is essential for dealing with local conflicts and for building sustainability and prosperity.

For the PEPF, this has meant that assisting in the design, building and maintenance of cross-sector partnerships at the local or community level has become the “core competence” of the organization. It is this that distinguishes the PEPF from other NGOs and NGO-support organizations in Poland. What

has been important for me personally is that the “core competence” in partnership building has been institutionalized in the PEPF. This is no longer something that is associated with me personally. The PEPF has an internal staff capacity and organizational capability for building social capital in Poland through Local Partnerships. In fact, I am no longer seen as leading the Local Partnership initiative

## 5. Cross Sector Partnerships Do Not Last Forever

Cross-sector partnerships like other ‘social institutions’ depend on the ongoing engagement of their constituent partners to give them meaning and justify their continued relevance. Unlike other institutions, though, by involving different types of partners, motivated by different types of interests, cross-sector partnerships have a built in gyroscope that constantly questions their relevance, effectiveness and direction.

An important, but neglected stage of the partnership cycle is that of termination or creative destruction, which focuses on how partnerships transform into more effective institutional arrangements for meeting a particular challenge. Cross-sector partnerships often use the resources, knowledge and insights of partners to turn ill-defined challenges into more defined problems that can be solved subsequently through improvements in existing institutions or else by the creation of new types of institutions. Accepting this role means thinking about the purpose of cross-sector partnerships as a means for strengthening or modifying the organizational capability of individual partners so as to increase the effectiveness of society in dealing with development challenges. If such strengthening is adjudged to have taken place, there may no longer be a role for the cross-sector partnership as it was initially conceived.

### Implications For Partnership Brokering

The important thing for the Broker is to ensure that cross-partnerships systematically and explicitly question their ‘value-added’. When there are better alternatives, the role and nature of the partnership must change or else the partnership should come to an end. The Broker must resist the tendency in many partnerships to continue without raising fundamental questions about whether the partnership is generating ‘added value’? For whom? In what ways and to what purpose? Typically, such questions are left to funders or the most vocal partners. The Broker should always be open to proposals for improving, modifying and otherwise changing the way the partnership operates. Indeed, all proposals to terminate the partnership should be taken seriously, especially if these propose new organisational forms that might be more effective and more appropriate to a particular situation.

### Krakow Development Forum

In 1993, Poland was going through a time of enormous change following the collapse of communist rule in 1989. The newly elected government introduced radical reforms aimed at moving Poland towards a market economy, the rule of law and democracy. It sought to initiate privatisation while creating structures for local and regional government, the emergence of an independent media, opportunities for small business development and the growth of civil society. While this was clearly a time of opportunity and excitement, for many it was also one of anxiety and confusion. Efforts to promote sustainable development at this time were mostly tentative and fragmented.

Krakow and the surrounding region were a microcosm of 4 challenges facing Poland:

- How to deal with widespread confusion among government, business and civil society as to their roles and responsibilities;
- The lack of experience of key sector leaders to operate confidently in their new roles;
- Knowing where to start in making national economic and political reforms generate benefits



at the local level; and

- The apparent disinclination for cross-sector collaboration.

Inspired by The Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum, local leaders from the public, business and civil society sectors created the Krakow Development Forum to promote cross-sector partnerships that would, “...bring social, economic, environmental and cultural benefit to the Krakow community and its regional, national and international context.” The KDF was designed to enable and promote collaborative work, not engage in project implementation itself. This was a partnership set up to identify opportunities, problems and to organise responses based on the resources and competencies of its members.<sup>13</sup>

Financing was obtained through a modest fee that affirmed individual commitment to the KDF idea. The initiating group comprised 26 individuals from different sectors with institutional support from the City Government, the IBLF and 6 companies. A management committee of five nominees from different sectors was accountable to a wide-ranging membership (including the Mayor and other civic and business leaders alongside teachers, activists, students and artists). By 1996, the KDF had a membership of 88 individuals from all key sectors in Krakow and 21 supporting members. Many projects identified were subsequently implemented and many more were generated.

The KDF was designed as a temporary partnership with the objective of strengthening the roles and responsibilities of the three sectors in contributing to the sustainable development of Krakow. An annual review was agreed upon to assess whether it was still needed and in 1998 it was decided that its aims had been accomplished. This was because the projects initiated through the KDF had taken on a dynamic of their own and for KDF members working in partnership had become second nature. The brokering role of the KDF was no longer needed.

As one of the founders of the KDF and its first Executive Director (1994-6), I learned that explicitly designing cross-sector partnerships as temporary endeavours for the purposes of dealing with a particular problem or issue was a very effective way of strengthening existing institutions and identifying gaps for establishing new institutional arrangements to fill gaps. This is because temporary structures and arrangements are seldom seen as threatening to existing institutions.

## 6. Cross-Sector Partnerships Need Brokers

To be effective, cross-sector partnerships need brokers for managing the complex relationships involved. In many situations, brokering functions are taken on unconsciously or intuitively by one or more individuals from the organizations involved. In more ambitious partnerships, the brokering function is designed in more consciously and deliberately, with one or more individuals being allocated brokering tasks by the partners. As a partnership becomes more firmly established, the role of Partnership Broker may be re-constructed as something closer to a partnership manager. The important thing is that Brokers are essential to successful cross-sector partnerships.

### Implications For Partnership Brokering

Coming into a partnership, the Partnership Broker needs to understand how the brokering function is being served. Who is delivering the brokering function? On what basis are they doing so? Do they have a mandate? Are they doing this consciously or unconsciously? The Broker must seek to answer these questions in order to define his own role. In this context, the challenge for the Broker has much to do with strengthening or adding value to the brokering function as it exists in the partnership.

What is also important is that few in a cross-sector partnerships will understand or appreciate you as a Partnership Broker. In this regard, it does not make any difference whether you are internal or external to the partnership. To be effective, it is important not to seek the appreciation of others, but rather to take pleasure in the success of others and that of the partnership. It is good to remember

that the moment you gain recognition and acclaim for your brokering contributions in a partnership, your effectiveness will likely diminish substantially.

Brokering is like refereeing a football match. If you do your job well, no-one will have noticed you, as attention will have focused on goal scorers and the thrill of the game. If you have done your job badly, you will be the focus of controversy.

## Environmental Partnership For Sustainable Development

The PEPF is part of an international consortium of 6 foundations sharing a common mission, which operate in Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, and Bulgaria.<sup>14</sup> Established in 1997 as a loose cooperation agreement, the consortium arrangement has become over the years more and more formalised and structured. In 2005, the consortium was turned into an international not-for-profit association and registered in the Czech Republic. Formalization of the Environmental Partnership was a response to a growing need to manage the multiple cross-sector partnerships, in which the national member foundations were engaged in. Over time, it became apparent that the brokering function was being fulfilled by many individuals within the “Environmental Partnership family”. The need was not for strong international coordinator, but rather for an arrangement according to which the brokering skills/resources present within the national member foundations could be made more readily available to all and used to the greater benefit of all.

The challenge of bringing order into the partnership brokering work of the Environmental Partnership was met through the development and adoption of a set of 8 principles. These principles guide the relationships of the Environmental Partnership (and its member foundations) with government, business, private funders and other sectors. These principles help the Environmental Partnership stay true to its mission of supporting sustainable development at the local or grassroots level. The principles were formulated as follows:

### 1. The principle of social investment:

Focus must be on addressing an environmental problem so that progress towards sustainable development can be measured (the emphasis is on thinking in terms of social investment);

### 2. The principle of autonomy:

Independence of partners must be assured so that they can contribute what they do best (The Environmental Partnership must have autonomy in programme delivery);

### 3. The principle of ethical funds:

Funds and other resources allocated to a project or programme must be legally or ethically generated (and their must be ‘no strings’ attached to funding or resource allocation);

### 4. The principle of continuous improvement:

Partners must be committed to active and continuous improvement aimed at achieving making the partnerships work for the benefit of all concerned (i.e. partnership is a relationship based on sharing risks, as well as benefits);

### 5. The principle of openness:

Partners must be committed to openness with each other when dealing with problems, mistakes, surprises, misunderstandings that will inevitably arise;

### 6. The principle of long term commitment:

Partners are committed to making the partnership work over long run as all parties must invest

continuously in making it work (i.e. a partnership is not about a one-time media event, grant or donation);

#### **7. The principle of no-fault termination:**

Not all partners will work and bring the expected benefits to the parties involved. This fact must be acknowledged and a strong partnership must be based on allowing any of the parties to opt out or withdraw from the partnership without attribution or blame;

#### **8. The principle of jointly agreed outreach:**

Even though motivations for entering into a partnership may be different, outreach strategies to the wider community - especially through the media - must be jointly agreed and monitored.

The 8 principles now form a point of departure for all new relationships with potential partners from government, private sector and philanthropic foundations. They form part of contractual agreements of the Environmental Partnership and its member foundations and have become part of their organizational culture.

The important lesson is that the brokering function can be codified and integrated into organizational culture. This is the case in the Environmental Partnership. In such a situation, there are many brokers.

I have come to believe that cross-sector partnerships are key to efforts aimed at achieving sustainable development through strengthening market economy and democracy. This is because they provide a way of nurturing a “sense of civics” or desire to look beyond self-interest and contribute to the public good. The need is not just to build widespread recognition or concern for the public good but a conviction among citizens that they have both the obligation and the opportunity to generate the public good.

Responding to what has been termed the “democratic deficit” is of special importance at present, as citizens in many places around the world (including Poland) appear to have lost faith not only in politicians, but in their own ability to contribute to building a democratic culture that generates and secures the public good. In this situation, cross-sector partnerships have very important role to play. They have potential to make a real difference. Partnership brokers are needed to ensure that cross-sector partnerships perform to their potential.

## Endnotes

- 1 My self-awareness as a Partnership Broker is linked to my collaboration with Ros Tennyson, which began in 1993. Her work and publications have influenced and informed my work over the years. The most influential were: R. Tennyson and L. Wilde. 2000. *The Guiding Hand: brokering partnerships for sustainable development*. London: Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum and the UN Staff College and R. Tennyson. 2003. *The Partnering Toolbook*. London: International Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN).
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- 4 For more on the Polish Environmental Partnership Foundation, see [www.epce.org.pl](http://www.epce.org.pl).
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- 6 Fukuyama, Francis. 1995. *Trust: the social virtues and the creation of prosperity*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- 7 *Ibid.* p. 26.
- 8 *Ibid.* p. 27.
- 9 The origins and philosophy of the Environmental Partnership is described in: R. B. Gratz. 2001. *A Frog, Wooden House, A Stream and a Trail: 10 Years of Community Revitalization in Central Europe (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Czech Republic)*. A report to the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, New York, New York and Environmental Partnership. 2000. *Nurturing the Grassroots: a decade of nurturing the grassroots 1991-2000*. Krakow-Brno: the Environmental Partnership for Central Europe. Both reports can be downloaded from [www.epce.org.pl](http://www.epce.org.pl).
- 10 For details of PEPF programmes, see [www.epce.org.pl](http://www.epce.org.pl).
- 11 The approach of the Polish Environmental Partnership is consistent with the philosophy and approaches of community-based sustainable development as presented by: H. E. Daly and J. B. Cobb. 1994. *For the Common Good: redirecting the economy toward community and environment and a sustainable future*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- 12 For more on the Local Partnership approach, see: A. Biderman, R. Serafin, B. Kazior and P. Szczygielski. 2004. *Building Partnerships: a practical manual*. Krakow: Polish Environmental Partnership Foundation.
- 13 The Krakow Development Forum and its origins are discussed in R. Serafin and R. Tennyson. 2006. 'Brokering the Partnership Idea'. *Partnership Matters* (forthcoming).
- 14 For more on the Environmental Partnership for Sustainable Development, see [www.environmentalpartnership.org](http://www.environmentalpartnership.org).