Partnerships in the 21st Century
- opportunities, challenges and the future -

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Working on multi-stakeholder partnerships since 1992. Initiator of the **Partnership Brokers Association** (2003-present). Recent work with Start Network includes 2 collaboration case studies:

**Working with Complexity:**
The first three years of the Consortium-building Story [2010-2013]

**Power and Politics**
The Consortium-building story continues [2014]

Both case studies available from [www.start-network.org](http://www.start-network.org)
Partnering – 7 (probable) myths
Positioning partnerships
and the need for a partnership broker

1. CONVENTIONAL
Partnership used as a strategy to deliver projects within the framework of the existing status quo

2. ADAPTIVE
Partnership designed to deliver development somewhat separate from, but alongside, the mainstream

3. TRANSFORMING
Partnership intentionally created to challenge and change mainstream systems and mindsets

Greater need for partnership process management aka partnership 'brokering'
Understanding complexity – Cynefin

Complex
- Cause & Effect coherent in retrospect, do not repeat
  - Complex adaptive systems
  - Multiple options
  - Emergent Practice

Chaos
- No Cause & Effect relationships perceptible
  - Take action to stabilise
  - Crisis management
  - Novel practice
  - Act- Sense- Respond

Complicated
- Cause & Effect separated by space and time
  - Systems thinking
  - Domain of experts
  - Good Practice
  - Sense- Analyse- Respond

Obvious (Simple)
- Cause & Effect relations repeatable & predictable
  - Process re-engineering
  - Rules, procedures, standardised
  - Best Practice
  - Sense- Categorise- Respond

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The Partnering Cycle

Partnerships evolve over time and need nurturing / supporting / shaping throughout their life cycle.
Get better at partnering effectively by:

- **Paying attention** to the partnering process
- **Building on diversity** to optimise value (for all parties)
- **Seeking to influence** the thinking of donors, lawyers & decision-makers
- **Learning to live and work** with complexity
- **Learning from mistakes** – don’t abandon the paradigm too soon

Source: internet images
Understanding the roles / tasks needed in partnering more effectively:

opportunities
...and training key players in relevant skills

• Interest-based negotiation
• Managing complexity
• Multi-stakeholder communications
• Resource mapping
• Reviewing value and effectiveness
• Record-keeping, story telling and synthesis
  and
• Partnership brokering

Note: The 4-day Partnership Brokers Training is coming to Geneva!
21-24\textsuperscript{th} April 2015
PARTNERING CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

Approach & Principles

Attitudes & Competencies

Results & Productivity

Efficiency & Effectiveness

Source: Partnership Brokers Work Book
What is the ‘optimal value’ from partnering?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPECTED</th>
<th>UNEXPECTED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Access to new resources</td>
<td>• Attitude change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Innovation</td>
<td>• Networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Quality</td>
<td>• Technical transfer</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Legitimacy</td>
<td>• Spin off activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>• More integrated solutions</td>
<td>• Wider influence on policy &amp; practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Appropriateness</td>
<td>• System change</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Likelihood of Implementation</td>
<td>• Capacity development of partners</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Scale</td>
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<td>• Sustainability</td>
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future
Partnering – 7 (possible) truths
# Collaboration myths and truths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>(PROBABLE) MYTHS</strong></th>
<th><strong>(POSSIBLE) TRUTHS</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agreement / consensus is essential</td>
<td>Alignment / relishing diversity is more important than agreement / consensus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partners must have common objectives</td>
<td>Partners must have complementary objectives and be willing to understand and respect each other’s</td>
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<tr>
<td>All depends on leader(s)</td>
<td>All depends on new models of leadership</td>
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<td>Successful projects are the most important outcome</td>
<td>Changed mindsets, more ‘fit for purpose’ systems and innovation may be more important than project outcomes</td>
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<td>Intermediaries / partnership brokers must be neutral</td>
<td>Intermediaries / partnership brokers must be transparent about their world view / basis for working and be willing to change their views if necessary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaboration requires compromise and being prepared to lose control</td>
<td>Collaboration, at its best, involves sharing control and re-defining / re-building each sector’s key roles &amp; responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration is simple – it just takes common sense</td>
<td>Collaboration is complex – it takes a range of skills, patience, impatience, persistence, vision, rigour and (above all) courage</td>
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