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A53

### **Some perspectives on collaboration within the community and voluntary sector**

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#### **Abstract**

Inter-agency collaboration, particularly in the not-for-profit sector has long been widely advocated as a means of achieving more significant impact for respective constituents. How do we know this to be the case? In an attempt to answer this question, we look closely at three examples of collaboration that are currently being undertaken by a small not-for-profit organisation, Care Alliance Ireland, one of whose stated objectives is to co-ordinate a national network of voluntary organisations supporting family carers.

These projects are: i) National Carers Week, ii) a joint conference, and iii) a joint piece of research. We reflect on the process, focussing on the collaborative aspects, and estimate the likely impact of these projects on our constituents. We also endeavour to estimate the likely outcomes of these projects had collaboration not been pursued. We use self-reflection and discussions with key actors to reflect on the projects and whether collaboration was considered valuable or an impediment. We use the stated goals of each project in an attempt to measure impact. Limitations to using this method include the vagueness of some original objectives and the difficulty in measuring impact.

We note the increasing popularity of alliances and ask what the triggers for this may be. We also examine some recent heightened calls for a reduction in certain not-for-profit organisations and pose the question. Is this a reasonable proposal or a veiled threat to the strength of the sector?

**Keywords:** Productive collaboration, alliances, not-for-profit, measuring outcomes, family carers

## **Collaborative strategic management: organizational versus collaborative implementation in multi-organizational cross-sector social partnerships**

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### **Abstract**

Multi-organizational cross-sectoral social partnerships are becoming increasingly common (Selsky & Parker, 2005), particularly as a means to address complex social and ecological problems that are too extensive for any one organization, such as the challenge of sustainable development. These partnerships involve meso-level social interactions between organizations. The focus of some of these partnerships is to formulate and implement a deliberate collaborative strategy (Huxham, 1993; Huxham & Macdonald, 1992), such as a collaborative regional sustainable development strategy (CRSDS). While there is a growing body of literature on cross-sectoral social-oriented partnerships, which is a sub-set of an even larger body of literature on inter-organizational collaborations (Cropper, Ebers, Huxham, & Ring, 2008), there is little focus on collaborative strategic management, especially concerning implementation and outcomes. This study addresses that gap by offering a conceptual model of collaborative strategic management.

Two qualitative empirical cases of CRSDS – the Montreal Collective Sustainable Development Strategy and the Antigonish Sustainable Development initiative - are explained using the conceptual model and their approaches compared. Data was collected through interviews with a cross-section of individual partners. In each case there were multiple partners, and the partners represent a wide range of organizational types including small businesses, business associations, large businesses, non-profit organizations, universities, and local government.

Findings are offered about the conceptual model. In addition, the implementation phase of the collaborative strategic management is explored demonstrating the interactions between the organizational-level implementation and the collaborative-level implementation. As the two cases are different size regions, questions of scale are also considered.

**Keywords:** inter-organizational collaborations, cross-sectoral social partnerships, sustainable development, regional development and meso-scale strategies

## **Collaboration and cohesion in enhancing social entrepreneurship: social and cultural attributes**

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### **Abstract**

This is a reflective paper that concerns the role of collaboration and cohesion in enhancing social entrepreneurship, as implemented in the context of Dorset, UK and Avalon, Canada. Those two cases refer to research that has been conducted in the context of two universities (Bournemouth University of the UK and Memorial University of Newfoundland of Canada) and are used in order to mirror approaches by which higher education institutions and other social actors can affect social entrepreneurship. It investigates the role of collaboration as a catalyst implemented at the local level that can result in sustainable social development. In this light, collaboration and collective mind and, social cohesion are utilised in the form of explanatory theoretical mechanisms.

Social entrepreneurship has been developed as a notion of emphasising the ‘social’ that is linked with commerciality in resolving societal issues. To this extent, intangible social capital can be created and used by social actors in order to achieve certain aims. By utilising social entrepreneurship this paper develops a model in an attempt to interpret the context of the case studies under consideration. In this respect, cohesion refers to the positive interactions, exchanges and networks between individuals and groups in order to create active social relationships. The extent to which those relationships are integrated defines the degree of inclusiveness and fairness in accessing opportunities or material circumstances hence it supports development of opportunities for quality of social life. The role of collaboration in such context is regarded as paramount.

Some of the issues the paper addresses are concerned with the commercially oriented and social welfare or mixing-the-two markets that social collaborators serve. More specifically the role of Bournemouth University and Memorial University of Newfoundland is examined, as drivers that may help social enterprises to maintain their value base. Moreover, the role of culture is questioned and how this can affect social life in the specific empirical object areas. Within the culture context, issues such as leadership and participation are identified. In addition, the paper focuses on the significance of promoting a climate for a student-centred experiential education that could perhaps enhance social entrepreneurship.

Methodology-wise the paper is based on primary research of qualitative nature via conduct of semi-structured interviews with university students and other members of the local community. Additionally, collection of secondary data is used. Regarding its conclusions, it is anticipated that the paper will identify the positive to social entrepreneurship role by social actors in the two different geographical settings as highly desirable. However, it will refer to a number of hurdles that have to be overcome. Ultimately, it is anticipated that these findings could create a data base for planning research on social entrepreneurship in the future by looking at cases perhaps at the national level.

**Keywords:** Collaboration, social cohesion, social entrepreneurship; social actors; social attributes; culture

## **Researching the European territories: expert collaboration and policy relevance**

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### **Abstract**

The first ESPON (European Spatial Planning Observation Network) research programme on comparative territorial development in Europe concluded in early 2007. A second programme of ESPON research is now under way for the period 2007-2013. These programmes are part of a larger process that commenced in the early 1980s with major milestones along the way including the publication of the *European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP)* in 1999, the *Leipzig Charter and Territorial Agenda for Europe (TAEU)* in 2007 and the *Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion* in 2008. Three key objectives underpinned the ESPON 1 agenda: (a) the idea of establishing across Europe a collaborative network of expertise on spatial development issues; (b) the identification of territorial trends on a pan-European basis, and (c) the search for reliable statistics in order to elaborate criteria and indicators for the monitoring of spatial development across the continent. ESPON 2 has retained these three objectives and added a fourth, the production of 'policy relevant' research. This paper reviews some of the findings of the ESPON programmes and reflects on the recent 'evolution' of ESPON in the context of the recent commitment of the EU to add the territorial dimension to its policy armoury.

**Keywords:** Territorial cohesion, spatial planning, ESPON, Europe, policy relevant research

A46

### **The colour of money: the (changing) role of funding in cross-border collaboration<sup>1</sup>**

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#### **Abstract**

Up until the 1990s, areas adjacent to the Border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland were synonymous with ethno-nationalist tensions and socio-economic decline. The advent of the Troubles in the late 1960s severed many of the existing cross-border relationships and disrupted the flow of people and services. Natural economic hinterlands were fractured and public sector agencies operated without reference to one another. Today, however, communities along the Irish Border are strong advocates of cross-border collaboration; redressing decades of socio-economic and physical decline and promoting innovations in economic development (incl. access to services) through collaborative partnerships. But while it has taken time and large financial inputs to get to this point, the issues of ethno-nationalist and regional identities remain and continue to impact on the make-up and focus of partnerships.

Funding for cross-border collaborative partnerships is a key factor in determining the nature and level of connectivity that exists between small cross-border settlements. The establishment of the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) by the British and Irish Governments in 1986<sup>2</sup> was the first public acknowledgement that this Border region was a distinct area with special needs. In responding to these challenges, funding allocations – and partnerships – were required to be innovative and support a range of initiatives. Given the unique context within which these early funders (i.e. IFI, PEACE, etc.) operated it was perhaps inevitable that each decision would be examined from an ethno-nationalist perspective for equality and equity. Decisions were often viewed locally among partnerships on the basis of ‘winners’ and ‘losers’; in a cross-border context where there is a legacy of conflict, tensions can however be increased rather than decreased by such a designation.

Whereas perceptions of imbalance in funding allocations have been addressed by the various stakeholders involved, significant challenges remain in respect of (i) the short-term nature and the changing focus (or cessation) of some funding programmes and (ii) the implications of this for the innovativeness of cross-border partnerships in terms of the structures and processes adopted. Diminished community relations have negatively impacted on the nature and form of partnerships and this raises the question: at what scale should cross-border partnerships operate?

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<sup>1</sup> This abstract is based on a recently completed research programme by the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD), exploring the inter-relationships between border towns and villages in the Irish Border region and the extent to which collaboration leads to mutual benefits.

<sup>2</sup> The same year as the Martin Scorsese film, *The Color of Money*, was released.

As a partnership model, the adopted endogenous approach to collaboration is dependent upon the involvement of community/voluntary groups; the very groups which are most reliant on financial support, and therefore vulnerable to changes in funding allocation policy. As a result of this uncertain funding environment much community-based cooperation remains informal, intermittent and dependent on a community development worker.

Examining the inter-relationships along the Irish Border, the research concludes that operational linkages between local government, community groups and intermediary NGOs are changing as council's take on a larger role in administering cross-border programmes. While the ongoing funding of such programmes, delivered through bottom-up partnerships, remains key to bridging the legacy of economic and infrastructural deficits such partnerships must involve a wider range of stakeholders and engage with larger geographical networks with similar concerns. In addition, while partnerships require a development worker, consideration needs to be given to the sharing of such workers across partnerships – thus ensuring stakeholders become more actively involved and require the skills to sustain the partnership upon cessation of the funded programmes (and the departure of the development worker).

**Key words:** Ireland, cross-border, collaboration, funding programmes

## **Proximity and temporary organizations: empirical evidence from Dutch temporary collaborations**

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### **Abstract**

Especially since the 1990s, there is an increasing academic and business attention for collaboration and inter-organizational collaboration (IOC) in particular. In the IOC literature, there is considerable attention for the importance of proximity between partners. To a large extent this proximity literature treats all IOCs alike, all having the same ways of organizing. In this paper, we reject this homogeneity assumption. To illustrate our position, we focus on a distinct form of IOCs, temporary organizations (TOs) as compared to non-TOs. TOs are defined here as a group of permanent organizations collaborating to accomplish a joint task with the duration of the collaboration explicitly and ex ante fixed, either by a specific date or condition on the completion of the task for which it was undertaken. The specific characteristics of TOs are likely to cause differences as on their impact on the functioning of the TO as compared to other forms of IOC. Therefore, we discuss the following research question: What are the differences between TOs and other IOCs and what are the implications with regard to different forms of proximity, especially for the functioning of the TOs?

The data for this project was gathered via a telephone survey. Prior to this survey a pre-test version of the questionnaire was submitted to a limited number of Dutch SMEs.

The data was analyzed in two stages. First, TOs and non-TOs have been compared on several key characteristics. We first checked the data for multicollinearity and heteroskedasticity issues and subsequently estimated several OLS-regressions with different outcome indicators as the dependent variables and characteristics of the collaboration as the independent variables. However, these analyses also yielded no significant differences between TOs and non-TOs.

We conclude that there are no significant differences in the levels of different forms of proximity encountered in TOs and non-TOs and that the relationship between these forms of proximity and the functioning of a collaboration also does not differ between them.

**Keywords:** Inter-organizational collaboration, temporary organizations, proximity

## **Hierarchy, network and market: the governance of collaborative innovation in Chinese hi-tech companies**

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### **Abstract:**

Inter-organisational collaboration on new product development is a defining feature in the corporate landscape. Increasingly, firms engage in different forms of collaboration in the new product development process to draw on complementary resources and capabilities among partners, share high upfront investment in Research and Development (R&D) and mitigate risks involved. This paper aims to investigate firms' motivations to collaborate and hence decisions to enter certain type of collaborative relationships through the lens of the transaction cost theory (TCT) (Williamson, 1975).

According to Williamson (1975), hierarchical, market and hybrid (network) forms of organisation provide alternative governing structures for any transaction. Compared with high governance costs of hierarchy and uncertainty in a purely arms-length market relationship, network organisations are argued to have the combined strengths of adaptability to fast changing environment (Contractor and Lorange, 1988; Gulati, 1988; Morgan and Bunt, 1994), access to tacit knowledge (Macneil, 1985), and efficiency and effectiveness in terms of governance costs (Elber, 1997). Some scholars thus propose that, with careful structural design, different forms of networks is a viable alternative to the traditional dichotomy of hierarchy and market governance (e.g. Alder, 2001; Deakin, 2009; Ouchi, 1980). The above arguments to some extent explain the popularity of collaborative innovation (network governance) over in-house R&D (hierarchical governance) or purchase of patents (market governance). However, the majority of existing research adopts a static view of the TCT and studies firms' motivations for, and decisions of, certain transactions. In contrast, this paper adopts a dynamic view of the TCT to study firms' motivations to move from one type of governance structure to another as well as their motivations to engage in multiple governance structures simultaneously in the new product development process.

The empirical evidence draws from embedded case studies of four Chinese companies operating in the pharmaceutical and medical devices industries. Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured face-to-face interviews with two to five senior managers in the top management team or new product development team in each case study company. Secondary data based on desk research were also gathered to understand the country-, industry-, market- and firm-specific information to complement the primary interview data. Thematic analysis was conducted to analyse the data. The findings of the paper are intended to contribute to the understanding of the dynamic nature of collaborative innovations as underpinned by the TCT in the context of Chinese high-tech industries.

**Keywords:** Collaborative strategies, network structure, Chinese hi-tech companies, new product development

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