New Possibilities for International Partnerships, Collaboration and Capacity Building in Educational Research

Angeline M. Barrett*, Michael Crossley* & Hillary Dachi
*University of Bristol & University of Dar es Salaam
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• Review of international literature in light of our collective experience of N-S research partnerships
• Critical reflections on one DFID-funded research programme consortium
• Draw out implications on different levels
  – EdQual
  – N-S research partnerships
  – Engagement of development agencies
  – Theoretical literature
Review of Literature

• Much on development partnerships; less on research partnerships
• Team members experience with research collaboration with colleagues in Belize, Kenya, Tanzania & Rwanda
• 2005-2010 EdQual
• Comparative perspectives on the dangers of uncritical international transfer of policy & practice - & research paradigms & approaches.
It is not easy to avoid the dangers of ‘uncritical transfer’ if one lacks the national or institutional capacity to undertake the type of research or investigative inquiry necessary to ‘customise’ the experiences of others, however tried and tested.

Dame Pearlette Louisy
Governor General St. Lucia
EdQual

School leadership
- Ghana
- Tanzania
- UK, Pakistan

Language & literacy
- Tanzania
- Ghana
- UK

School & pupil effects
- Bristol (SACMEQ)

Curriculum Change
- South Africa
- Rwanda
- Pakistan
- UK

Use of ICT
- Rwanda
- South Africa
- UK, Chile

13 PhD projects
- Ghana, Rwanda, SA, Tz, Zanzibar

2 Small Scale Projects
- Ghana, SA, Tz
The ‘Reflections’ Research

- 14 written reflections
- 2 ‘reflection workshops’
- Anonymous successes & challenges from around 20 people
- Documents
  - Invitation to tender, proposal
  - Inception phase report, Annual reports,
Vision for partnership

• Research conceptualised and led from within Africa
  – Critique of dominant research ‘collaboration’ models
  – Moral & ethical position (Postcolonial perspectives)
  – Relevance to African policy and practice (comparative perspectives)
Vision for Partnership

• High premium on process goals
  – Equitable partnership
  – N-S-S collaboration & networks
  – Capacity building for all (N&S)
Decentralising leadership?

DFID’s TOR
centralised model of management, “partners involved in all stages”

EdQual aspiration
decentralised management of projects
New Roles New Tensions

Director
Responsibility
indirect control

African researchers
Circumscribed leadership
Resource for management

UK – resource
Reactive vs Proactive?
Communication channel
Incentives?
## Conclusions & Implications

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<th>EdQual</th>
<th>N-S-S collaboration</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Critical reflection,</td>
<td>Shared informed value-basis</td>
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<td>learning</td>
<td>Human element - Mutual respect &amp; trust</td>
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<td>• Celebrate small steps</td>
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<td>• Build on caps</td>
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<th>Funders</th>
<th>Theoretical literature</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Risk new research</td>
<td>• Recognise tensions &amp; challenges of new research</td>
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<td>partnership modalities</td>
<td>modalities</td>
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<td>• value process outputs,</td>
<td>• Development as process</td>
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<td>get product outputs</td>
<td>not product</td>
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**Funders**

- Risk new research partnership modalities
- Value process outputs, get product outputs

**EdQual**

- Critical reflection, learning
- Celebrate small steps
- Build on caps

**Theoretical literature**

- Recognise tensions & challenges of new research modalities
- Development as process not product