PLATFORMS FOR PARTNERSHIP:

Emerging good practice to systematically engage
business as a partner in development

Platforms for Partnership:
Emerging good practice to systematically engage business as a partner in development

Contents

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

BoP	Base of the Pyramid
BPDF	Business Partners for Development Facility
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
GAIN	Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GPEDC	Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation
LDC	Less-Developed Country
LIC	Low-Income Country
MIC	Middle-Income Country
(I)NGO	(International) Non-Governmental Organisation
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation

MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MNC	Multi-National Company/Corporation
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PLB	Project Laser Beam
PLA	Partnership Landscape Analysis
PPP	Private-Public Partnership
RBM	Roll Back Malaria
SAGCOT	Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania
TPI	The Partnering Initiative
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGC	United Nations Global Compact

Platforms for Partnership: An essential mechanism to engage business as a partner in development

In September 2015, the UN will announce the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. While specific targets and indicators are still being finalised, one aspect is clear: multi-stakeholder partnerships between business, NGOs, government, the UN and communities will be essential to achieve the goals and they will be needed at a scale and quality that dwarfs current levels of collaboration.

The question of how countries can systematically scale up the engagement of business as a partner in development was the subject of the 'Roadmap' report,[1] launched in April 2014 by the UK Secretary of State, Justine Greening, at the GPEDC high-level meeting in Mexico City.

Developed with extensive consultation with business, government and civil society around the world, the Roadmap sets out a series of milestones building up the level of public-private engagement and collaboration, leading to the ultimate goal of business as a 'full partner' in delivering the post-2015 development agenda (figure 1).

The Roadmap designates five action areas to be undertaken by all societal sectors in order to complete the journey:

1 Build trust across the sectors and build understanding of their alignment of interest and the benefits of partnering;

2 Ensure open and inclusive planning of development priorities to engage business;

3 Create in-country multi-stakeholder platforms to systematically broker partnerships across the sectors;

4 Ensure partnership good practice and effectiveness and measure results to demonstrate value;

5 Build institutional capability for partnering, including developing strategies, systems and processes and individuals' partnering skills and understanding.

This report focuses on the in-country multi-stakeholder platforms: ongoing mechanisms that can systemically bring together business, government, the UN, NGOs and communities around issues of both business and societal importance, and catalyse direct innovative partnership action.

Depending on their focus, such platforms can in turn significantly impact several of the other action areas. Through the dialogue that the platforms facilitate and, most importantly, through working together in the partnerships the platforms catalyse, business, government and other development actors will naturally build understanding and trust. By demonstrating the intrinsic alignment of interest between government and business, the platforms can directly support government in engaging business in the setting of development priorities. And by providing direct support to partnerships, the platforms can help to ensure they are set up to be as robust and effective as possible as well as assisting in measuring their value to all sides.

Multi-stakeholder platforms form an essential part of the 'infrastructure' that is necessary to scale up public-private collaboration for post-2015 development. Creating effective, sustainable platforms, however, is a significant challenge. It requires a whole range of skills, support and processes to engage stakeholders from all sectors and ensure they receive sufficient value to remain engaged; to host innovation labs and other creative dialogues to spark collaboration ideas; to provide technical support to facilitate nascent partnerships; and measure the value partnerships are delivering. And, of course, all the time ensuring the platform has sufficient resources and a sustainable business plan.

This report sets out emerging good practice on creating effective platforms that can systematically engage business as a partner in development through public private collaboration. While being academically well-grounded, it is a highly pragmatic report, based on the real, on-the-ground experiences of developing and running platforms. As such, it directly acknowledges and tackles the tension between what is theoretically desirable and what is practically feasible under normal, resource-constrained circumstances.

While the report is a significant contribution to the art and science of developing effective platforms, the field is still emerging. The Partnering Initiative, through its Business Partners for Development programme, is supporting the creation of platforms in a range of countries and will continue to draw out learning from these experiences and develop tools and guides for effective practice.
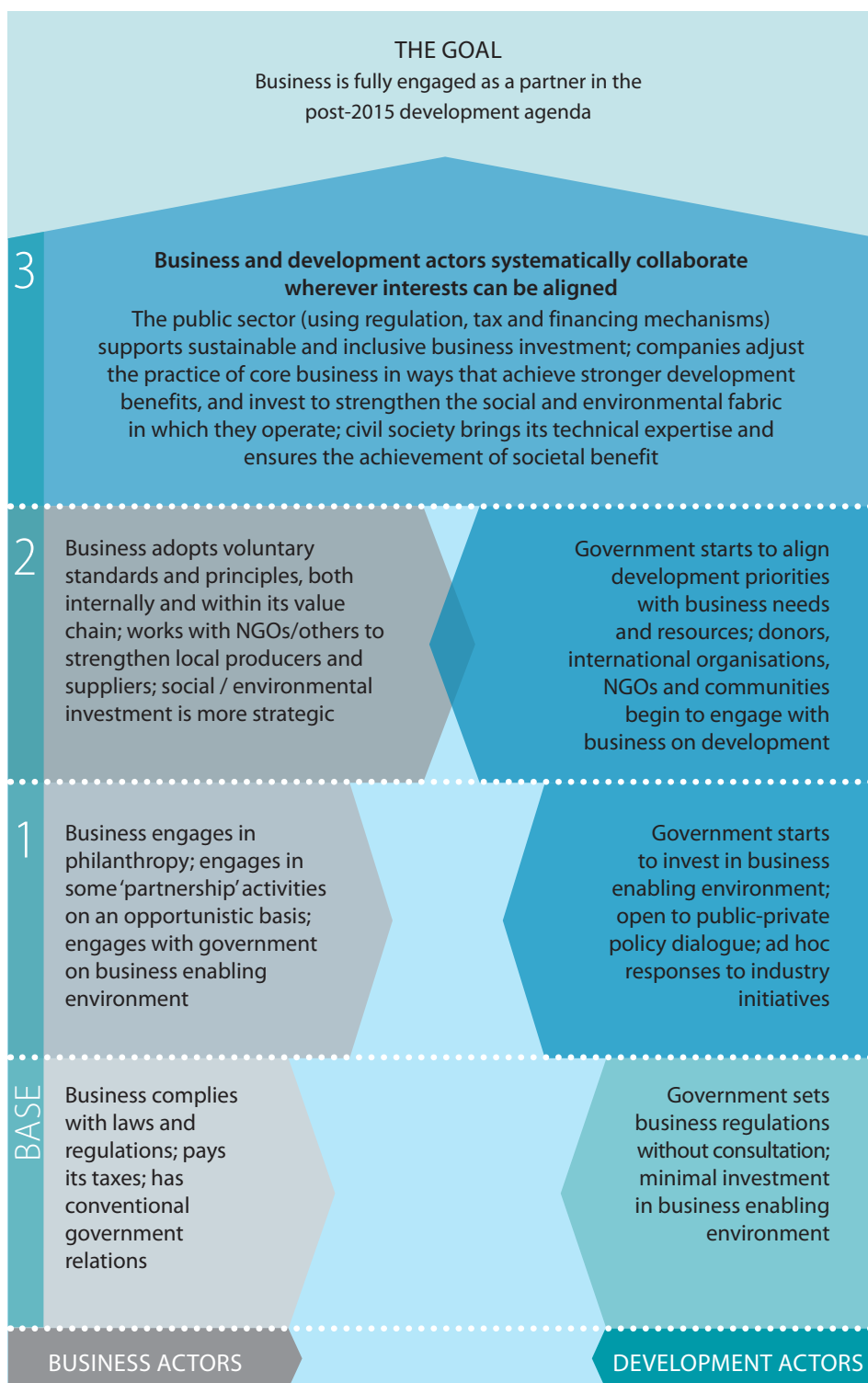
**Darian Stibbe, Executive Director,
The Partnering Initiative**
November 2014

1. The Roadmap was developed for the GPEDC by The Partnering Initiative with support from UK Aid: BPDF.org

FIGURE 1: **SERIES OF MILESTONES ALONG THE JOURNEY TOWARDS BUSINESS AS A 'FULL' PARTNER IN THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

THE GOAL
Business is fully engaged as a partner in the
post-2015 development agenda

3
Business and development actors systematically collaborate wherever interests can be aligned
The public sector (using regulation, tax and financing mechanisms) supports sustainable and inclusive business investment; companies adjust the practice of core business in ways that achieve stronger development benefits, and invest to strengthen the social and environmental fabric in which they operate; civil society brings its technical expertise and ensures the achievement of societal benefit

2
Business adopts voluntary standards and principles, both internally and within its value chain; works with NGOs/others to strengthen local producers and suppliers; social / environmental investment is more strategic

Government starts to align development priorities with business needs and resources; donors, international organisations, NGOs and communities begin to engage with business on development

1
Business engages in philanthropy; engages in some 'partnership' activities on an opportunistic basis; engages with government on business enabling environment

Government starts to invest in business enabling environment; open to public-private policy dialogue; ad hoc responses to industry initiatives

BASE
Business complies with laws and regulations; pays its taxes; has conventional government relations

Government sets business regulations without consultation; minimal investment in business enabling environment

BUSINESS ACTORS   DEVELOPMENT ACTORS

Executive Summary

With a growing appreciation of the interconnection and interdependence of the prosperity of business and the prosperity of the society, as well as an understanding of the innovation, scale and sustainability that collaboration across the sectors can bring, partnerships have never been higher up both the development and business sustainability agendas.

Intergovernmental initiatives, such as the Busan Forum on Aid Effectiveness and the resultant Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, have fully recognised business as an essential development actor – both in terms of the benefits it brings through its core business (livelihoods, tax revenues, efficient delivery of goods and services) and through the strategic social investments business must make to ensure its own long term sustainability. The UN's post-2015 vision explicitly cites partnerships with the private sector – at global, national and local level – as a critical mechanism towards achieving the new Sustainable Development Goals and demands a major scaling up and mainstreaming of public-private collaboration.

Multi-stakeholder platforms are an essential part of the 'infrastructure' necessary to achieve the scale of collaboration required for the post-2015 development agenda. These platforms for partnership provide ongoing mechanisms that can systemically bring together business, government, the UN, NGOs and communities around issues of both business and societal importance, and catalyse direct innovative partnership action.

Creating effective, sustainable platforms, however, is a significant challenge, requiring a whole range of skills, support, structure and process to ensure they are set up well, are sustainable and are able to deliver. This report sets out emerging good practice on how to make them successful.
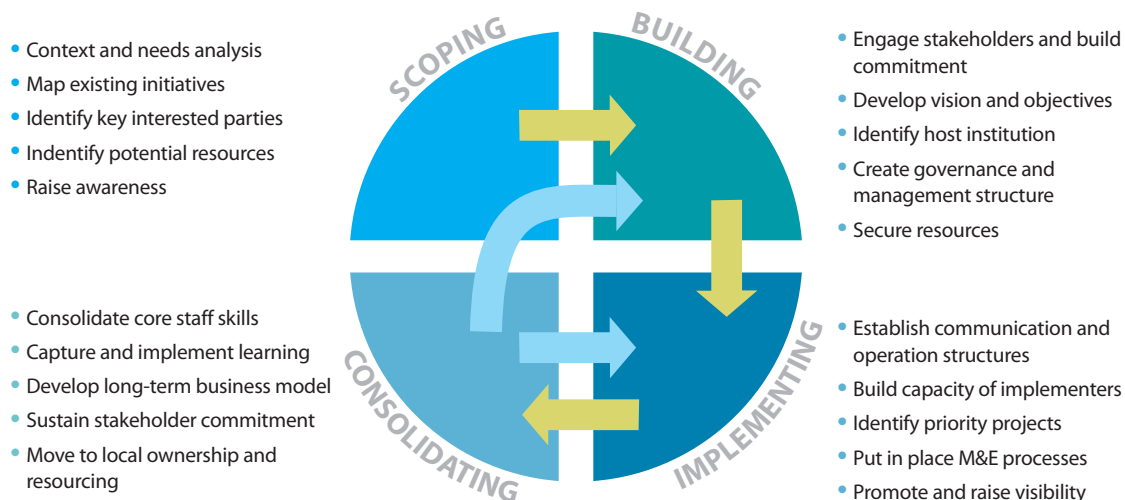
Process for developing and implementing platforms

The figure below shows the range of activities required in the development and implementation of a platform through a lifecycle model which was developed by drawing on the development and implementation of a range of platforms on the ground.

The life-cycle model divides the overall development of the platform into Scoping, Building, Implementing and Consolidating phases. Although having a process to follow is extremely valuable, in practice there will not be such a clear-cut distinction between the stages of development: the growth of a platform is not a direct linear process and will be subject to review and revision as it develops. Growing a multi-stakeholder platform is always an iterative process where learning from experience must continually inform the improvement of practice.

Even where there is well-planned progress towards creating and sustaining a new platform, inherent contradictions can emerge between what might in theory be considered best practice, but in reality may lead to further challenges or simply not be pragmatic. These are explored in the 'force field' analysis below.
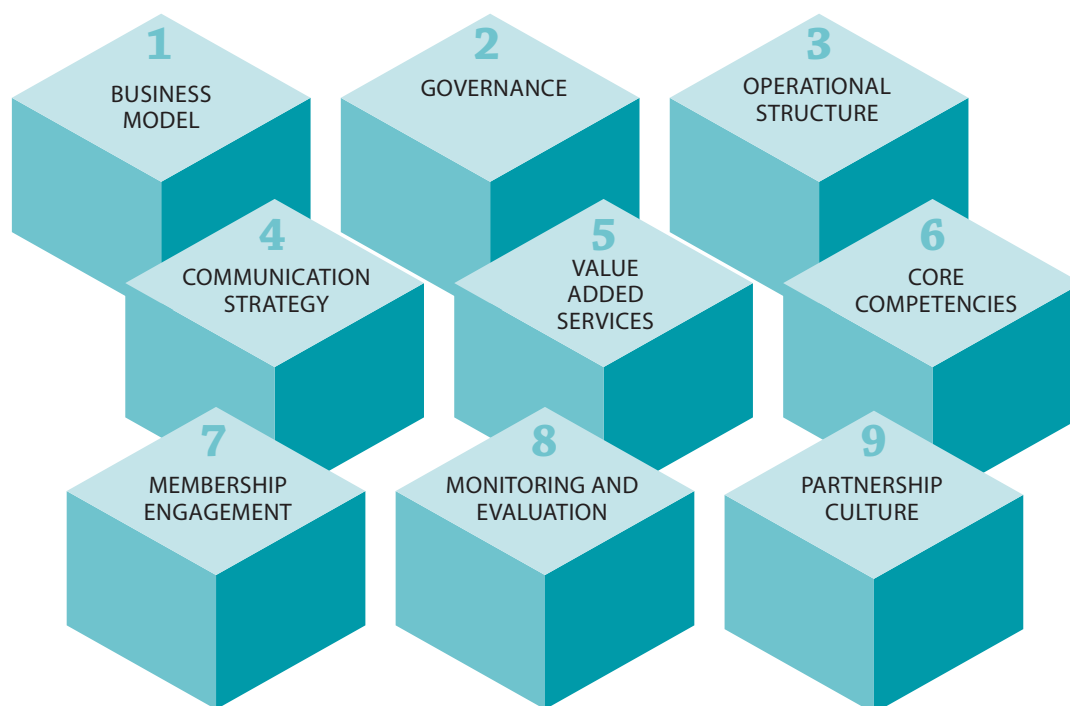
THE PLATFORM LIFE-CYCLE SHOWING TYPICAL ACTIVITIES AT EACH STAGE

SCOPING
- Context and needs analysis
- Map existing initiatives
- Identify key interested parties
- Indentify potential resources
- Raise awareness

BUILDING
- Engage stakeholders and build commitment
- Develop vision and objectives
- Identify host institution
- Create governance and management structure
- Secure resources

CONSOLIDATING
- Consolidate core staff skills
- Capture and implement learning
- Develop long-term business model
- Sustain stakeholder commitment
- Move to local ownership and resourcing

IMPLEMENTING
- Establish communication and operation structures
- Build capacity of implementers
- Identify priority projects
- Put in place M&E processes
- Promote and raise visibility

Note: Depending on context, certain activities may take place across multiple phases of the lifecycle

FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS OF INHERENT TENSIONS IN BUILDING PLATFORMS

DRIVING FORCES	RESTRAINING FORCES	POSSIBLE RESOLUTION
Inclusivity – value of including wide range of stakeholders	Diversity of competing perspectives – harder to achieve consensus – higher transaction costs	• While being open and inclusive, careful selection of partners based on their commitment to action, rather than complete representation • Clear statement of the platform's mission and vision • Strong mechanisms for managing communication and decision-making
Champions – value of high profile backing and leadership to give credibility and visibility	Dependence on limited number of individuals – harder to move from initial phase to more settled institutional management	• Medium to long-term plan, from start-up, for moving from initiating to consolidating. • Adequate core funding in place to recruit high calibre individuals to take on management roles
Credibility – reputation and acknowledged expertise increases support and legitimacy	Lack of track record – new organisations find it hard to produce evidence of impact especially given long lead times	• Strong promotion of expertise within stakeholder group • Support from global initiative or other allied platforms in different countries/areas • Focus on a small number of 'quick wins' – projects that can be implemented more rapidly and establish credibility
Strong vision and shared commitment to values of the platform	Expectations may be too high and this may lead to disenchantment or withdrawal of support if set-up and development take too long	• Manage expectations – clarify likely life-cycle and timings • Ensure strong commitment from stakeholders, embodied in MoU and/or resource commitment beyond the start-up period • Establish core funding for 2-4 years rather than 1-2
Government backing – regarded as essential in all cases and integral to ensuring that the platform has legitimacy and can align its output with official targets	Red tape – government decision-making can be slow and bureaucratic (especially to the private sector)	• Government to allocate sufficient resources, and personnel with experience of cross-sector or private sector work, to supporting the platform and personnel with experience of cross-sector or private sector work • Establish strong dialogue across platform to explain process and enable transparency
Private sector engagement – brings market knowledge, resources and technical expertise	Base of the Pyramid operations are often "pre-competitive" and do not offer immediate returns on investment, making it hard for companies to justify long-term engagement, and creating pressure on timescales	• Government and multi-laterals to share risk with companies • Explicit matching of funding and resources to move away from a culture of philanthropy or entitlement • State agencies to create enabling frameworks for better market operation
Global support – larger networks offer fund-raising, technical input and learning from previous platform projects	Strong global leadership risks undermining local stakeholders and setting up a North-South or donor-recipient divide	• Establish robust local networks with credible reputation and leadership • Create a strong local presence and high visibility • Plan for a transition of responsibility and resourcing to local actors • Make the degree of indigenous resourcing and decision-making one measure of success

NINE BUILDING BLOCKS OF HIGH-PERFORMING PARTNERSHIP PLATFORMS

Our research, involving platforms for partnership from all over the world, has identified nine critical elements that constitute the 'building blocks' for any platform for partnership. An understanding of these elements – and proper attention to their achievement – will maximise the likelihood of a platform meeting its internal and external goals, establishing a sustainable institution and delivering development impact through cross-sector partnerships. Each of these building blocks represents a summary of factors that are critical in designing, managing and implementing a multi-stakeholder platform for partnership.

1 Sustainable Business Model
Every platform needs a strategy to achieve its purpose. Central to this strategy is the issue of how the platform is going to access and generate sufficient funding both to support its core operation and to enable it to broker and support innovative new partnerships. Initial grant funding may be essential to set up a platform in the first place and allow it time to build up wider knowledge and interest in partnership as well as to demonstrate success. For it to remain sustainable, the platform must be offering sufficient value, through its services and through the impact generated, that organisations wish to continue to support it through grants, fees for service, membership service, or some combination of these.

2 Governance
The actions of those managing the platform, allocating resources or selecting partnerships to support, must be accountable to all stakeholders within a clear system of rules. This is not only a basic requirement to demonstrate transparency but a practical means of monitoring actions and outcomes. An absence of good governance systems will undermine trust between participants and may increase the (already high) transaction costs involved in a multi-stakeholder platform.

At the same time, it is important not to rush into too-rigid governance structures in the early development stages while the platform is engaging its core group of partners and co-developing its activities and approaches. It is also essential that governance structures can adapt and change as the platform itself adapts and iterates its approach when it begins to implement in earnest.

3 Operational management structure
Building an effective platform institution requires the design of an appropriate and effective management structure to implement the platform's tasks and produce its stated outputs. All platform participants need to understand the structuring of the platform, the roles of respective actors

and the systems that are in place to achieve realistic outcomes. The operational structure should be in place at an early stage to ensure that participation is purposeful and productive.

4 Communication strategy

Good communication is vital to the success of all cooperation. It is especially critical in platforms where the large number and diversity of stakeholders makes communication potentially complicated or cumbersome, and methods of communication must be carefully chosen to suite the range of organisational or professional cultures. Effective communication is not only about internal information-sharing and trust-building: it must also involve promotion of the platform's vision and purpose to the wider audience of interested parties and potential partners.

5 Value-added services

Platforms must offer well-defined and relevant services that provide significant value to members, partners and clients. Typically, a platform will offer services including *innovation spaces* for engaging stakeholders and identifying partnerships; partnership *facilitation and brokering*; and *training* to build partnering capacity.

Innovation spaces or other forms of facilitated cross-sectoral dialogue have the potential to build understanding of the overlapping interests of organisations from different sectors, to begin to align those interests, and to be creative in identifying the potential for innovative win-win partnerships. Brokering of those nascent partnerships (or scaling up or replication of existing partnerships) then entails taking the partners through an effective partnering process to ensure all are fully engaged and committed and the partnership is set up to be as robust and effective as possible.

6 Core Competencies

Creating and catalysing new development partnerships, and providing services to them, all require a high level of competence in both the theory and practice of cross-sector partnering. Hiring experienced professional partnership brokers and putting in place training and development programmes to develop the necessary knowledge and skill are essential to establishing a viable structure, team and procedures for a new platform.

In addition to the knowledge and skills required to directly support partnerships, the platform secretariat will also require skills around membership management, financial management, and fundraising.

7 Membership engagement and management

Particularly in the early stages, the identification of platform champions can be an effective element in developing and retaining engagement from members and other external stakeholders. Strong public champions of the platform will motivate participants, raise wider awareness of the initiative and engage stakeholders in contributing resources or promoting the added value of the platform to others.

Critical to the longer term success of any platform is the ability of its members to move from engagement driven by initial goodwill to long-term collaboration based on trust, an understanding of a shared movement towards a vision, and an appreciation of received value. The platform has an essential role in facilitating dialogue among its members, in communicating success with excellence, in listening and reacting to its members' needs, and in helping its members appreciate, and articulate, the value of the platform.

8 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of a platform for partnership should aim to focus on three main areas: the *platform* itself; the specific *partnerships* it brokers or supports; and the overall contribution to *business and development goals*.

Within each of these areas, monitoring and evaluation might look at process (how are things working?); *outputs* (are goals being met according to plan?) and *impact* (is there evidence of improvement in key social and economic indicators?).

Well-integrated review mechanisms will not only support learning and decision-making for the platform but will also provide important reassurance for national and global stakeholders seeking evidence of value and impact.

9 Partnership culture

Just as with any partnership, a complex, multi-stakeholder platform requires a strong overall vision around which diverse sectors can mobilise, acknowledging that they will have different reasons for participation but can still develop common objectives, towards which they can work collectively.

Delivery of the vision has to be supported by strong partnership values of respect, mutual benefit, equity and transparency. Values are not only a key element of the overall vision but a critical contributor to building a demonstrably collaborative culture in the platform.

Trust between diverse participants of platforms has to be built over time. Platform participants often need to overcome previous prejudices, misconceptions, or bad experiences, before they can collaborate freely. This is often best done through dialogue, shared action and the demonstration of adherence to strong values. Demonstrating commitment, consistency and reliability will all contribute to the creation of trust between diverse collaborators: those driving and managing the platform need to embody these behaviours themselves in order to build an understanding of partnership culture among their wider membership group.

Conclusion

Multi-stakeholder platforms for partnership have been identified as an essential mechanism for increasing the engagement of business in development at the country and regional level. More than any other collaborative model they embody the principles adopted at Busan and enshrined in the UN vision of a post-2015 architecture for development. They offer the potential for intensive, innovative and sustained collaboration from all sectors on issues that are integral both to national development plans and to a flourishing and sustainable private sector.

However, they are not an easy option. While they have great potential for impact, they require long-term stakeholder commitment, sustained resourcing and consistency of personnel to help ensure their success.

1 Introduction

The past 20 years have been characterised by increasing levels of private sector engagement with issues such as poverty, humanitarian crisis, and long-term sustainable development. The acknowledgement, by leading global companies, of the need to work in the developing world with sensitivity to local context, local needs and local institutions has resulted in a multitude of initiatives aimed at reconciling the growth of developing world markets with the improvement of health, welfare, education and living standards in low and middle income countries.

This process has been characterised by a shift from a primarily philanthropic approach (business donating funds to communities, NGOs and the UN) to one based on the long term business interests and core resources of companies, working in partnership with government, the UN system, International NGOs, local small producers and community-based organisations. The rise and rise of the multi-stakeholder cross-sector partnership has facilitated a positive transformation in the way that private companies interact with other sectors and in the way they do business with local producers, suppliers and communities.

At the same time, donor governments, UN agencies and international NGOs have recognised that long-term solutions to poverty, disease and food insecurity in developing countries have to include private business – not just through their charitable foundations but also through the impact of their core business activities.

In recent years attention has turned to the challenge of how best to engage the private sector through more innovative partnership arrangements and the pooling of financial, technical and commercial resources. At the global policy level, the Busan High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (2011) confirmed the centrality of cross-sector partnerships to sustainable development and cited public-private co-operation as one of the "building blocks" of aid effectiveness. Busan also marked an important shift of focus towards the national level and the primacy of aligning global development plans with national plans and aspirations. Accordingly, there has been increased interest in the forms of partnership which might deliver optimal results at the country and regional level.

These trends are clearly evident in the current debate over how to organise and accelerate sustainable development after the expiry of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015. The conceptualisation and construction of a post-2015 agenda for global development will depend heavily, at country level, on the closer alignment of national aspirations, international support and the realisation of business interests. Such alignment will require more, and more innovative, forms of collaboration between actors from all sectors.

The active engagement of the private sector – at global, national and local level – is integral to the post-2015 vision, but it is an engagement that will focus more than ever before on the value offered by core business activity: wealth creation, employment, technological progress and investment in human resources.

In order to achieve the necessary scaling up of public-private collaboration, a new 'infrastructure' will be required to catalyse and drive partnership action. One key element of that infrastructure is the multi-stakeholder platform at country level. Such platforms are focused on bringing together local actors from the public, private and not-for-profit sectors to foster dialogue and to generate partnerships for development that derive from the compatible aspirations of the different sectors. Platforms of this kind most directly reflect the priorities articulated at Busan – they are at country level; are based on the alignment of interests between participating actors; and are committed to practical, measurable impact on development needs.

In recent years attention has turned to the challenge of how best to engage the private sector through more innovative partnership arrangements and the pooling of financial, technical and commercial resources.

To date, the number and visibility of such platforms has remained low and there has been limited monitoring and evaluation of their progress. If such collaborative mechanisms are to be an integral part of the post-2015 architecture for delivering social and economic improvement to low and middle-income countries, there needs to be considerably better knowledge available, on which to base future decisions on investment, support and advocacy for multi-stakeholder platforms.

This report presents the main findings of a study, carried out by The Partnering Initiative in early 2014, to identify the key factors which help or hinder the achievement of successful outcomes in multi-stakeholder platforms for development partnerships. The study was based on an extensive review of data from current platform activities, on nine original case studies of in-country platforms and on a two-day facilitated workshop of platform practitioners.

The intended audience for the study comprises national and global policy-makers, donor organisations, humanitarian agencies, private enterprise at international and local levels, and civil society bodies. It is primarily aimed at informing practical decisions on the modes of investment, planning, structuring and management of in-country platforms to ensure that they can deliver the public-private collaboration essential to achieving progress in all fields of sustainability and development.

2 Platforms within the business and development architecture

The drive to create a coherent architecture of business engagement acknowledges the complexity and diversity of the current development landscape. There is a need for greater co-ordination and coherence in aid and development activities. There is also a widely-expressed desire for better mapping, monitoring and evaluation of the impact and value of business engagement in development. Multi-stakeholder platforms are currently regarded as one effective means both of responding to this fragmentation of effort and of enhancing the level and impact of business sector engagement.

There have, to date, been a number of influential studies which have identified the characteristics and benefits of a development approach based on diverse, multi-stakeholder platforms that focus on building cross-sector dialogue and acting as a catalyst for new projects and partnerships within a defined geographic area. These include the work by King's College, London on humanitarian platforms,[2] the work of the CSR Initiative at Harvard Kennedy School[3] on "business ecosystems", the studies by FSG of "collective impact",[4] and The Partnering Initiative's (TPI) experience in establishing and analysing Business Partners for Development Facilities.[5]

The terminology used to describe these innovative arrangements still varies from study to study and, indeed, from one project to another. Nevertheless, there is a growing consensus around the unique character and benefits of multi-stakeholder platforms established in limited geographic regions with the resource and commitment to catalyse and support new partnerships for development. These are distinct from many existing partnership and platform activities in their membership, structure, scope, location and outputs.

The focus of this report is precisely those in-country platforms which have been established to broker and support new and/or innovative partnerships for development. This distinguishes our primary interest from the broader category of platform which might include multi-stakeholder platforms at global level established primarily for knowledge exchange, advocacy or investment. Nevertheless, some of those global platforms may have a critical role to play in initiating, nurturing or replicating locally-focused platforms for partnership. Indeed, the most recent FSG work on "backbone structure" for "collective impact"[6] emphasises the role of major global partnerships such as GAIN and RBM in "defining a high level framework for action towards a common agenda and defining shared metrics while the local backbone organizations coordinate implementing partners on the ground in specific locations."[7]

The country-level platforms for partnership that are the subject of this report are defined as:

"An ongoing mechanism to systematically drive the creation of bi-lateral or multi-stakeholder partnerships for development. Platforms undertake activities to convene and align government, business, NGOs, donors and other development actors around a particular issue or geography, facilitate innovative collaborative approaches and directly broker and support new partnership action."

---

2. Oglesby & Burke (2012)

3. Jenkins (2012)

4. Kania, J. and Kramer, M. (2011); Turner, S. et al (2012); Patscheke, S. et al. (2014)

5. Most notably, 'Creating the Zambia Business Partners for Development Facility – Scoping Report & Recommendations' July 2013

6. Patscheke, S. et al (2014)

7. Ibid. p.3

3 Platforms for partnership in operation

There are already a wide variety of platforms operating across Africa, Asia and Latin America. Although they have certain key features in common, they will also display differences in their priorities, their constitutions and their membership profiles. What makes them identifiable as part of a common phenomenon is the overall commitment to bringing together public, private, not-for-profit and community actors to create dialogue and partnerships around shared local development goals.

Typically, a platform for partnership might aim to achieve a combination of two, three or more of the following inter-linked objectives:
- Promote, support and enable a range of cross-sector partnerships for development at the local (national) level
- Increase awareness of the role of business in development
- Provide new opportunities for dialogue between business and government
- Increase the impact of public sector and civil society action by leveraging the expertise and resources of the private sector
- Build capacity for partnering among public and private bodies
- Sustain and scale development activities through effective cross-sector partnership

The Partnership Platform Lifecycle

The Partnership Platform Lifecycle sets out the main stages and the typical activities at each stage in the development and management of the platform.

The life-cycle model divides the overall development of the platform into Scoping, Building, Implementing and Consolidating phases. In practice there will not, of course, be such a clear-cut distinction between the stages of development: the growth of a platform is not a direct linear process and will be subject to review and revision as it develops. Sources of funding, membership profile, staffing and many other elements will need to be revisited as the external environment changes and the platform encounters new challenges. **Growing a multi-stakeholder platform is always an iterative process where learning from experience must continually inform the improvement of practice.**

FIGURE 2: **THE PLATFORM LIFE-CYCLE SHOWING TYPICAL ACTIVITIES AT EACH STAGE**

SCOPING
- Context and needs analysis
- Map existing initiatives
- Identify key interested parties
- Indentify potential resources
- Raise awareness

BUILDING
- Engage stakeholders and build commitment
- Develop vision and objectives
- Identify host institution
- Create governance and management structure
- Secure resources

CONSOLIDATING
- Consolidate core staff skills
- Capture and implement learning
- Develop long-term business model
- Sustain stakeholder commitment
- Move to local ownership and resourcing

IMPLEMENTING
- Establish communication and operation structures
- Build capacity of implementers
- Identify priority projects
- Put in place M&E processes
- Promote and raise visibility

Note: Depending on context, certain activities may take place across multiple phases of the lifecycle

Nevertheless, the use of a model enables us to focus on those issues of primary importance at the stage when they are most likely to be encountered. Figure 2 is a visual representation of the platform life-cycle with typical activities that will be carried out at each stage of the cycle. The yellow arrows indicate the typical chronological sequence of development. The blue arrows highlight the iterative nature of the cycle whereby learning will feed back into the development and growth process.

Inherent tensions

In terms of this evolutionary cycle of a platform, an important finding from the research was the prevalence of internal tensions within platforms, which could represent significant challenges to their successful development. Drawing on the insights from our nine case studies of current platforms, it was clear that, **even where there was well-planned progress towards creating and sustaining a new platform, inherent contradictions could emerge between the activities and the intended goals.** Thus, despite a platform's key stakeholders being cognisant of good practice and doing their best to implement it, internal tensions can be created which need to be acknowledged and planned for.

The simplest example of such inherent contradictions appears in the tension between the principle of inclusivity and that of administrative efficiency. There is virtually unanimous agreement, both in the literature and among our case study respondents, that in-country platforms for partnership need a large group of stakeholders representing a full range of relevant sectors and institutions, from central government to local enterprises. Consequently, many of the platforms included in this study had large numbers of formal participants, often totalling forty or more organisations. Although such inclusivity contributes to effective consultation, credibility and alignment of goals, it also generates challenges of managing communication, funding the high transaction costs of co-ordinating the network, and creating mechanisms to reconcile the diversity of opinions and approaches offered by the stakeholders. It also makes more difficult the task of creating a new and shared culture of partnership to bind the stakeholders together over the long haul of developing, maturing and sustaining the platform.

There are similar tensions evident in other aspects of the practice observed in ongoing platforms. For example, the need for high-profile champions in the early stages of development can compete with the need to establish a core administrative team for the platform as it moves into the more settled phase of implementation. At this latter point there is a greater need for institutionalisation of good practice and the creation of a central administrative structure that is adequately resourced and trusted to deliver the facilities required for successful catalysis of new partnership projects. Over-reliance on high-profile individuals, or on leadership intervention, begins to constitute an obstacle to progress or an undermining of the role of the core platform institution.

Similarly, the absolute necessity of engaging state actors in the platform carries with it the risk that conventional modalities of planning and funding will be imposed and that there will be less opportunity to create innovative partnerships. Conversely, an over-emphasis on the staff and processes coordinating the platform can lead to them struggling to get internal commitment and this can inhibit the organisations' ability to scale-up activities

Although such inherent tensions in the partnership-building process cannot be entirely eliminated, an awareness of the challenges they create will make platform stakeholders better prepared to manage the developmental life-cycle of the platform. This is of particular importance to funders, to the initiators of the platform and to global networks that might be supporting the new initiative. Preparation for the likely challenges to platform success needs to be an integral part of early-stage planning and, in particular, of the allocation of resources to the support and facilitation of the platform.

Figure 3 below uses forcefield analysis[8] to present a number of challenges rooted in the tension between good practice and the costs, commitment or contradictions it might create. The table also includes a column of practical recommendations for improving planning and preparation for such challenges.

In Section 5, we present in greater detail our conclusions on the critical activities required to build a successful platform for partnership and how those activities might enable platform stakeholders to avoid or to overcome the most serious challenges at each stage of the platform life-cycle.

8. Lewin, K. (1943)

FIGURE 3: **FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS OF INHERENT TENSIONS IN BUILDING PLATFORMS**

DRIVING FORCES	RESTRAINING FORCES	POSSIBLE RESOLUTION
Inclusivity – value of including wide range of stakeholders	Diversity of competing perspectives – harder to achieve consensus – higher transaction costs	• While being open and inclusive, careful selection of partners based on their commitment to action, rather than complete representation • Clear statement of the platform's mission and vision • Strong mechanisms for managing communication and decision-making
Champions – value of high profile backing and leadership to give credibility and visibility	Dependence on limited number of individuals – harder to move from initial phase to more settled institutional management	• Medium to long-term plan, from start-up, for moving from initiating to consolidating. • Adequate core funding in place to recruit high calibre individuals to take on management roles
Credibility – reputation and acknowledged expertise increases support and legitimacy	Lack of track record – new organisations find it hard to produce evidence of impact especially given long lead times	• Strong promotion of expertise within stakeholder group • Support from global initiative or other allied platforms in different countries/areas • Focus on a small number of 'quick wins' – projects that can be implemented more rapidly and establish credibility
Strong vision and shared commitment to values of the platform	Expectations may be too high and this may lead to disenchantment or withdrawal of support if set-up and development take too long	• Manage expectations – clarify likely life-cycle and timings • Ensure strong commitment from stakeholders, embodied in MoU and/or resource commitment beyond the start-up period • Establish core funding for 2-4 years rather than 1-2
Government backing – regarded as essential in all cases and integral to ensuring that the platform has legitimacy and can align its output with official targets	Red tape – government decision-making can be slow and bureaucratic (especially to the private sector)	• Government to allocate sufficient resources, and personnel with experience of cross-sector or private sector work, to supporting the platform and personnel with experience of cross-sector or private sector work • Establish strong dialogue across platform to explain process and enable transparency
Private sector engagement – brings market knowledge, resources and technical expertise	Base of the Pyramid operations are often "pre-competitive" and do not offer immediate returns on investment, making it hard for companies to justify long-term engagement, and creating pressure on timescales	• Government and multi-laterals to share risk with companies • Explicit matching of funding and resources to move away from a culture of philanthropy or entitlement • State agencies to create enabling frameworks for better market operation
Global support – larger networks offer fund-raising, technical input and learning from previous platform projects	Strong global leadership risks undermining local stakeholders and setting up a North-South or donor-recipient divide	• Establish robust local networks with credible reputation and leadership • Create a strong local presence and high visibility • Plan for a transition of responsibility and resourcing to local actors • Make the degree of indigenous resourcing and decision-making one measure of success

4 The research case studies and their activities

Following an extensive review of the available literature, the research team selected nine current platforms, all of which conformed to our definition of a country-level platform for partnership, and undertook a short case study of each. As the brief descriptions below demonstrate, platforms have been created to address a range of different economic, social and environmental problems in developing and transitional economies

A number of these in-country platforms have their origins in major global partnerships and represent an extension of the principles of cross-sector co-operation into a local context. Other platforms have emerged from independent initiatives by private companies or civil society bodies seeking to establish national or regional initiatives which might have substantial impact in a well-defined sphere of activity. All require the active endorsement and co-operation of governments and public agencies and all acknowledge that business involvement must go beyond philanthropy and incorporate core commercial interests.

1. Amsterdam Initiative on Malnutrition (AIM)

AIM is a cross-sector group brought together to explore partnerships in 2009. The purpose of AIM is to provide a platform to develop innovative and sustainable solutions to malnutrition through collaboration between NGOs, academia, Dutch businesses and government, with organisations in economically developing countries. AIM brings global partners together to develop links and implement partnerships with in-country partners (e.g. agribusiness, healthcare, civil society) on seven work streams: rural retail hubs; milk fortification; food fortification; vegetable supply; nutrition for employees; water and health kiosks; and farm produce quality assessment. The platform offers collective analysis of business and development challenges, information sharing, facilitated dialogue and learning, on-going partnership support and access to finance. This is primarily carried through group calls on a monthly basis with bi-annual face-to-face meetings.

2. ALIARSE

ALIARSE is a Costa Rican foundation established in 2007. The aim of the ALIARSE is to promote and support private-public partnerships that contribute to sustainable development and to equity, through social responsibility. ALIARSE acts as a catalyser for Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) for sustainable development. This involves developing the capacity for working in partnership focusing on health, education and the environment. ALIARSE provides secretariat services and brokers PPPs, carrying out research, providing training and staff exchanges. It focuses on managing the platform, acting as the initiator, coordinator, broker and catalyser.

3. Business Partners for Development Facility (BPDF) Hubs in Zambia and Colombia

The BPDF, a programme of Sida, the Dutch Ministry for Foreign Affairs, DFID and The Partnering Initiative, supports the creation of partnership 'Hubs' in-country, including in Zambia and Colombia. The Hubs help to drive the engagement of business in development by systematically promoting and supporting the development of 'win-win' partnerships between companies, international agencies, government and NGOs to tackle business sustainability or development challenges. In Colombia, the Hub hosted by Andi, the national association of business, and supports a range of collaborations mainly involving its members. In Zambia, AMSCO, an independent host iwth a number of dedicated brokers, supports the creation of partnerships in a number of areas including job creation and agriculture.

4. Musika

Musika is a Zambian non-profit organisation established in 2011. The aim of Musika is to improve the livelihoods of small-holder farmers across Zambia. They aim to achieve this through supporting the development of the agricultural private sector via technical services and subsidies to change the practices of existing agriculture companies who want to work with small-holder farmers. Thus, they support the creation of private-private partnerships. Musika provides three broad services: i) technical assistance to private sector organisations; ii) access to resources to catalyse change in private sector practices; and iii) brokering between the private sector and communities.

5. Partners Forum for Action on Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases

The Partners' Forum is a Trinidad and Tobago group established in 2011 for an initial period of 2 years. The aim of the Forum is to act as both a catalyst and a mechanism for multi-sector action to promote health and reduce chronic non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in Trinidad and Tobago. The partners build and develop a cross-sector approach to reducing non-communicable diseases. This involves establishing joint planning and coordinated implementation across public and private sectors, identifying and sharing

best practice, and mobilising resources (political will, finance, community involvement etc.) to support joint actions. They also are building a repository of evidence on reducing non-communicable diseases and are developing standards/policies for government and industry.

6. The Niger Delta Partnership Initiative (NDPI)

The Niger Delta Partnership Initiative is a partnership established in 2010 by Chevron Corporation through the creation of a strategic foundation in the USA (NDPI Foundation) and an implementation foundation in Nigeria (PIND Foundation). The aim of NDPI is to establish innovative multi-stakeholder partnerships that empower communities to achieve a peaceful and enabling environment for equitable economic growth in the Niger Delta. NDPI provides access to finance, dialogue between public and private sectors and civil society, and acts as an information hub. It focuses on four key programme areas: Economic Development, Capacity Building, Peace Building, and Analysis and Advocacy.

In particular, PIND supports partnership activity through its two Economic Development Centers (EDC). The EDCs act as resource and coordination hubs for development programs and partners in the Niger Delta. They provide a broad range of support for PIND's programs and other development partners (including USAID, DFID, U.S. African Development Foundation [USADF] and Chevron Nigeria Ltd).

7. Project Laser Beam (PLB)

Project Laser Beam is a global and local public-private partnership launched in 2009. The aim of Project Laser Beam is to reach 500,000 malnourished children and create a scaleable, replicable and sustainable model to significantly reduce child under-nutrition. PLB plans and implements public-private partnerships in Bangladesh and Indonesia on four nutrition-related themes (food, water, health and hygiene, women and employment). This covers a variety of programmes e.g. providing high nutrient school food, home gardening, hand-washing, supporting women to continue education. Research and planning of interventions is carried out at the global level, with coordination of activities carried out by a lead global partner in-country. Interventions build on existing nutritional solutions drawing partners together to provide a holistic response to child under-nutrition in-country.

8. The Southern Agriculture Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT)

SAGCOT is a Tanzanian public-private platform initiated in 2010. The aim of SAGCOT is to coordinate government, donor and corporate investments and interventions in agribusiness value-chains and supporting infrastructure. The purpose is to remove bottlenecks and improve the overall agriculture system to kick-start environmentally sustainable and socially beneficial commercial agricultural development in the Southern Agricultural Corridor of Tanzania. SAGCOT is a long-term platform with targets for 2030. SAGOT provides a dedicated secretariat and forum to facilitate dialogue and catalyse new public and private sector investments in the corridor.

9. The National Platform for Responsible Production and Trade of Pineapples

UNDP Pineapple platform was established in 2010 in Costa Rica. The aim of the platform is to establish a multi-stakeholder and inter-institutional dialogue, with the aim of creating a joint action plan that provides tangible solutions to reduce the negative environmental and social impacts of pineapple production in Costa Rica. The platform provides a space where stakeholders come together to share knowledge and create new partnerships around the pineapple production process. In the platform, participants have focused on developing a national strategy for sustainable commodity production and trade, creating working groups to analyse and discuss solutions, documenting case studies, creating capacity building programs for public and private sector organizations and proposing policy reform recommendations.

5 Building a successful platform for partnership

Our research has identified nine critical elements that constitute the 'building blocks' for any platform for partnership (see figure 4). An understanding of these elements – and proper attention to their achievement – will maximise the likelihood of a platform meeting its internal and external goals, establishing a sustainable institution and delivering development impact through cross-sector partnerships.

FIGURE 4: **BUILDING BLOCKS FOR HIGH-PERFORMING PLATFORMS**
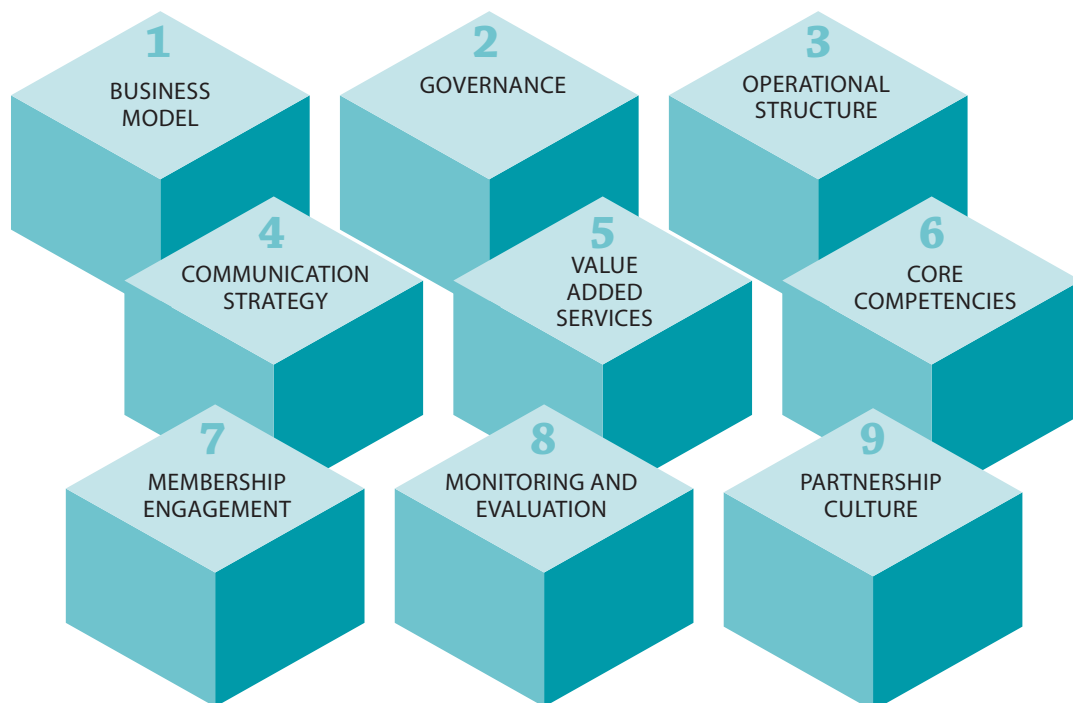
BUILDING BLOCK 1:
Sustainable Business Model

1

Every platform needs a strategy to achieve its purpose. Central to this strategy is the issue of how the platform is going to access and generate sufficient funding both to support its core operation and to enable it to broker and support innovative new partnerships. Platforms are themselves complex forms of co-operation which involve significant transaction costs. There is little value in allocating substantial resources to establishing platforms in an environment that is inappropriate. Thorough preparatory research is needed into the suitability of any local environment for investment in a new platform.

Platform practitioners have highlighted the need to undertake an initial review of the suitability of the environment for partnership activity, analysing the local infrastructure, the availability of resources and the maturity of markets for goods and services. An effective business model for a platform has to be fit-for-purpose: it must demonstrate that any proposed funding streams are realistic and sustainable within this local context. Expert input can be of value – to do cost modelling, create budgets and build financial projections.

There is no single model for funding the creation of platforms but there is a recognised need for secure funding to be in place in order to underwrite activities for a specified time-period at the outset of the platform initiative. This might be provided by donor governments, by international agencies or by a combination of private and public sources. The initial time period needs to be sufficiently long for the platform to achieve success and demonstrate its value to its 'clients' and partners.

Donors also need to consider whether the platform itself will provide funding for the partnerships it helps to create and support: a clear distinction has to be made between central funding provided to finance the platform administration itself and any subsequent 'catalytic' fund established to support local partnerships.

Most platforms have been established as facilitators of dialogue and partnerships rather than as funding mechanisms so it is important that the overall strategic model clearly demonstrates how the platform will access funding to support its core administrative and management functions while creating a sustainable financial relationship with those institutions and projects that it helps to broker, establish or support with guidance, training, or other services.

This raises the possibility of a number of different long-term funding models depending on where and for whom value is being created. Such models may include donor funding, membership charges, fees for services, in-kind contributions and social investment.

Any charging for membership or services will need a clear pricing structure and a persuasive statement of the value proposition offered by the platform to potential donors, members or clients. Platform stakeholders will also need to build in a degree of flexibility so that the financial model can be changed over time as priorities change from start-up to capacity-building and to implementation.

As the platform develops, consideration needs to be given to the challenge of moving towards greater local ownership. Research shows that establishing a strong sense of local responsibility and ownership for the operations of the platform (and its associated partnerships) increases the likelihood of long-term sustainability. Any partnership projects need to be closely aligned with the needs of local actors, with local communities and organisations taking a leading role in such initiatives. Too great a dependence on external 'top-down' funding can endanger the credibility and viability of the platform at national and local level.

AIM has progressed to the early implementation stage of a platform, developing its funding model as it has grown. As a topic, funding raised a number of questions that were not simple for participants to address and an element of 'priming' participants was required. Whilst initial in-kind funding from organisations brought participants together, they then took steps to develop an overall strategy and full proposal for the platform's sustainability with seed money from the Dutch government. This proposal led AIM to gain further financial support from the Dutch government, allowing them to move towards early implementation of partnerships. Although this generated finances, the overall funding process also provoked debate: issues were raised regarding who received what funding for their partnerships, and what influence the private sector would have in deciding development expenditure.

CHALLENGE

How do we mobilise resources in a sustainable way?

As the platform-building process develops, participants need to address the issue of how its activities will be sustainable in the longer term: raising start-up funding may be a lot easier than creating medium and long-term revenue streams. The platform also has to establish its own identity and credibility independent of the institutions that originally created it.

Constituent elements within this challenge include:

1 How to retain stakeholder commitment after the initial 'honeymoon' phase;

2 How to cope with periods of transition and change as the platform develops;

3 How to establish the platform's credibility;

4 How to secure access to long-term resources.

Practical steps to be taken to meet this challenge will include:

- Consider establishing a membership model which requires members to demonstrate long-term commitment through cash or in-kind contributions

- Encourage high-level champions who can endorse the platform and act as ambassadors and conflict resolvers;

- Research external trends so that the platform can offer relevant, income-generating services;

- Build capacity through selecting skilled staff and through sharing learning with regional and global bodies;

- Build membership trust through good communication and attention to members' needs;

- Maintain neutrality by establishing clear terms of reference and demonstrating the platform's independence from any specific sector or institution;

- Respond immediately to challenges and demonstrate 'quick wins' and added value.

BUILDING BLOCK 2:
Governance

2

The actions of those managing the platform, allocating resources or selecting partnerships to support must be accountable to all stakeholders within a clear system of rules. This is not only a basic requirement to demonstrate transparency but a practical means of monitoring actions and outcomes. An absence of good governance systems will undermine trust between participants and may increase the (already high) transaction costs involved in a multi-stakeholder platform.

At the same time, it is important not to rush into too-rigid governance structures in the early development stages while the platform is engaging its core group of partners and co-developing its activities and approaches. It is also essential that governance structures can adapt and change as the platform itself adapts and iterates its approach as it begins to implement in earnest.

In order to support good governance, the platform should espouse and embody clear values, around which participants can mobilise. Values are not only a key element of the overall vision but a critical contributor to building a demonstrably collaborative culture in the platform. The values most frequently cited in our research were neutrality (the platform is neither political nor partial); equity (all members have equal status regardless of size or resources); and transparency (the work of the platform is undertaken in an open and accountable way).

Good governance means setting out the duties and responsibilities of all those involved in the platform. It means operating with universally accepted rules, principles and procedures that offer confidentiality where appropriate but transparency in the critical areas such as decision-making and funding. Power must be seen to be shared in a fair and equitable way to address possible imbalances; communication channels must be accessible to all.

To enable good governance to be established, key values and principles must be agreed and communicated to all participants. If values and principles are unclear, it will be hard to achieve consensus on issues of accountability and harder still to establish trust. At a practical level, there is a need to embody good governance in an appropriate committee structure underpinned by standard operating procedures (SOPs). A number of our case study platforms had to dedicate considerable time and resource to ensure that both the principles and the practice of good governance were in place.

The experience of Musika in Zambia highlights that establishing a governance structure was key to successfully attracting funding and to communicating their partnership's approach to clients. Musika was set up as a not-for profit organisation and needed to establish its credibility with potential partners through defining its governance. This involved outlining the relationships between the different actors to establish the ownership structure of the organization (shared between six existing agriculture-related institutions) and to set out a structure for staff and senior management to show credibility and auditability for funding requirements of DfID and SIDA. This structure also helped Musika explain to clients its services, accountability, support and facilitation of partnerships, and how partners could benefit from working with Musika.

CHALLENGE

How do we formalise commitment and find out who really means business?

As the platform structure and goals begin to come together and governance is put in place, it is essential to understand which stakeholders can, and will, show long-term commitment to the initiative.

Constituent elements within this challenge include:

1 Ambiguity over whether stakeholders contribute towards the objective;

2 People say they are committed but when it comes to investing resources they are absent;

3 Commitment at mid-management level is not taken up by or communicated to senior levels;

4 Poor commitment by one actor: you can have high commitment from an organisation but the person at the table doesn't fulfil it.

Practical steps to be taken to meet this challenge will include:

• Address non-commitment quickly;

• Start with small group of committed members who can demonstrate they can achieve targets;

• Formalise commitment as soon as possible through:
  – Defining clear objectives and expected results
  – Defining clear added value of partnership and payback
  – Working together in a participatory way
  – Gaining commitment of resources when action plan is defined;

• Check each organisation has the ability to partner.

BUILDING BLOCK 3:
Operational management structure

3

Creating a strategy for the platform and ensuring clear values and good governance will provide a sound basis for development. Building an effective platform institution requires the design of an appropriate and effective management structure to implement the platform's tasks and produce its stated outputs. All platform participants need to understand the structuring of the platform, the respective roles of actors and the systems that are in place to achieve realistic outcomes. The operational structure should be in place at an early stage to ensure that participation is purposeful and productive.

Central to an effective structure is the recruitment and funding of a professional central administrative team. Establishing a central secretariat to operate the platform on behalf of stakeholders is a key element in moving from the initial scoping phase into actual implementation of the partnership catalysis process. The relationship between the secretariat and the board or committee representing the main stakeholders should be appropriate, transparent and embodied within a framework of operational guidelines. The secretariat must have access to the financial, human and technical resources required to carry out its remit. Research has highlighted that platforms have been weakened when secretariats were underfunded and thus unable to adequately carry through decisions taken at a strategic level.

As the platform develops its activities so the core management team will have an increasing role in interacting with those in the partnerships it supports. Thus the secretariat will perform not only a central administrative function but also an active role in intermediation – facilitating information flows among the players involved, giving them the confidence to act when their success depends on what others are doing. In the medium to long-term the platform must establish operational systems that permit it to survive beyond the initial "honeymoon" phase and the first round of resourcing: the platform must achieve sufficient permanence so that what began as innovation becomes "business as usual".

In creating an effective and appropriate operational management structure the platform stakeholders have to identify and recruit high-calibre staff, secure adequate funding to maintain the core team, and clearly define the relationship between the executive staff, the leadership and the governance system. From the outset, the core management team will need to be able to communicate a shared vision of the platform's objectives and develop an action plan with timelines, budgets and realistic outputs.

The Partners for Action on Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases established a secretariat within the Ministry of Health Education and issued terms of reference for participants to understand forum activities and what was required from them. As the Forum developed they also created a work plan to implement the terms of reference supported by three working committees. This allowed participants to join a group relevant to their own interests, to focus effort on three priority areas, and to help keep individuals aligned to the overall aims of the forum. This created an initial focus for the Forum during its two year mandate to help it identify and work towards achievable outcomes.

CHALLENGE

How should we structure the platform for success?

As the platform starts to identify its objectives, vision and strategy there is a need to systematically structure and organise how the participants will work together. This involves identifying what is shared, what is available, and what can be done.

Constituent elements within this challenge include:

1 Building a shared vision and defining common objectives that can be operationalized in guidelines, legal frameworks, working practices;

2 Developing human resources, networks of support, capacity building for participants;

3 Obtaining resources (financial, human, technical assistance);

4 Creating tools, management systems and procedures.

Practical steps to be taken to meet this challenge will include:

- Build a shared mission and vision of platform's objective;

- Define platform leader, governance body (equal participation, rules), and team members;

- Create a budget with defined purposes and team roles (desired and real);

- Identify potential members;

- Develop an action plan based (what do we want to do, with whom, and how).

BUILDING BLOCK 4:
Communication strategy

4

Good communication is vital to the success of all co-operation. It may be especially critical in platforms where the large number and diversity of stakeholders makes communication potentially complicated or cumbersome. Good communication means communicating in an open but focused way and using channels of communication accessible and familiar to participants. The identification of appropriate methods of communication is a vital factor in effective collaboration when participants are drawn from different organisational or professional cultures. Effective communication is not only about internal information-sharing and trust-building: it can also involve promotion of the platform's vision and purpose to the wider audience of interested parties and potential partners.

Creating and maintaining open communication can empower stakeholders to participate, overcoming barriers of cultural difference and mutual distrust. It is not, however, a trivial undertaking: substantial time and effort needs to be invested to ensure effective exchange of information and ideas. Such a process has the added risk of raising expectations which – if not met – may create disillusionment with the platform mission.

Developing a strategy for effective communication will better enable platform members to share their learning across sectors represented within the platform. The value of joint and reciprocal learning in the building of a partnership culture is being increasingly recognised: working with other sectors offers the chance not just to acquire new knowledge but to benefit from exposure to different perspectives on common problems and to share new skills in analysis and decision-making. Collaborating with culturally distinct organisations should always be viewed as an opportunity for learning, and acknowledging the value of that opportunity can be an element in a platforms' communication strategy.

Successful communication strategies emerging from our research include the selection of the most effective shared communication channels for all parties; ensuring that communication is regular and consistent; practising openness and honesty in all communication. Positive results can be obtained through the core team actively facilitating feedback and sharing learning across the membership and/or stakeholders.

At the beginning of the National Platform for Responsible Production and Trade of Pineapples, coordination and communication were key to convening participants and creating a dialogue between pineapple producers and exporters. Unfortunately, a reduction in initial funding led to cuts to communication staff and less clarity in the platform's purpose both internally and externally. This led to participants recognising that it was important to establish a communication strategy to inform all stakeholders about the scope, progress and results of the process to consolidate and increase the platform's credibility. As the platform now moves towards implementing their action plan they have established funding from the Sustainable Trade Initiative of the Netherlands (IDH) to develop a platform communication strategy.

CASE STUDY
NATIONAL PLATFORM FOR RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTION AND TRADE OF PINEAPPLES

BUILDING BLOCK 5:
Value-added services

5

Platforms for partnership act as a catalyst for innovative partnerships between its members, its external stakeholders and other local parties. Platforms – primarily through their core management team – have to offer well-defined and relevant services that are strongly aligned with the needs both of national development plans and commercial business growth and which provide sufficient value to engage members and attract funding. Those services have to be communicated and delivered by a team with access to appropriate human, technical and information resources.

Three typical core value-add services are: *innovation spaces for engaging stakeholders and identifying partnerships; partnership facilitation and support; and risk management.*

Innovation spaces or other forms of facilitated cross-sectoral dialogue, have the potential to build understanding of the overlapping interests of organisations from different sectors to begin to align those interests, and to be creative in identifying the potential for win-win partnerships. Approaches such as 'innovation labs', when run properly and with the right people in the room, have the potential to bring people out of their usual ways of thinking, drive creativity, build connections and social capital, as well as building understanding of how diverse resources can create innovative, win-win solutions, and develop momentum towards nascent partnership ideas.

A successful partnership platform should have the capacity to nurture the development of new partnerships, replicate those that have been successful, and scale up existing partnerships that have the potential to grow. For all but the simplest of partnerships, given the diversity of partners' interests, cultures, systems and expectations, a highly robust approach to brokering is essential. Brokering a partnership entails engaging organisations; building trust and mutual understanding; finding areas of common interest; developing a shared vision; identifying competencies and resources, and building Equity. It also requires agreeing or identifying objectives that create value for all, a workplan, funding

sources, roles and responsibilities, governance and operational structures, and reviewing arrangements.

The brokering role is a highly specialized one, requiring significant experience and skills to do it well. This is therefore an area where there is very significant potential for the platform to offer genuine value to its members.

Institutions and actors differ in their willingness to expose themselves to risk or uncertainty and this is a particular problem when institutions from different sectors – with very different risk cultures – are brought together in new partnerships. A platform's operating model might include resources to create initial vehicles for higher-risk activity to be undertaken securely, offering mechanisms to support or underwrite early-stage projects in order to permit members to take a degree of risk in launching innovative partnerships. Managing risk is another way in which a platform can foster innovation, encouraging business to move into new areas.

Our case study respondents highlighted the value of carrying out a professional market assessment and needs analysis to identify local needs; also of identifying potential partners to engage with in offering services and managing risk. It was important that any services and outputs were aligned with shared development goals and responded to perceived gaps in local skills and knowledge.

SAGCOT was established with the purpose of providing services to support the revival of agriculture in the southern corridor of Tanzania. Coordination of agribusiness investments along with bridging finance from a catalytic trust fund were identified to align to national and international development goals in food security, green growth and economic development. SAGCOT is seen as a way of implementing the Kilimo Kwanza (Agriculture First) initiative from the Tanzanian government and to develop Tanzania as a south-central "granary" region. Through its services it aims to benefit domestic food supplies, export earnings, smallholder farmers, and local communities. Internally, SAGCOT has established an independent secretariat to provide technical and human resources as part of its services.

CHALLENGE

How do we demonstrate the platform's added value?

At the outset of the platform-building process those driving the initiative need to engage key stakeholders from many different organisations. The initiative has to attract support, resources and commitment despite being a new, and perhaps unfamiliar, style of collaboration. There is a basic need to demonstrate that participation in the platform will deliver value for participants, over and above what they might be deriving from existing activities.

A number of separate elements to this challenge can be identified:

1 How to articulate the added value of the platform and, in particular, how to distinguish it from ongoing initiatives or partnerships;

2 How to engage the private sector effectively, using existing models such as philanthropy, market development, base of the pyramid;

3 How to avoid the platform being dominated by one sector or institution;

4 How to communicate both the platform process (how to engage) and the platform outcomes (what will be done).

Seven practical steps can be taken to address these issues and meet the challenge effectively:

• Find 'low-hanging fruit' and design the platform's outcomes so that participants will see early evidence of added value;

• Select a clear focus for the platform's work that can be easily understood and has relevance to all sectors;

• Demonstrate an awareness of the languages and perspectives of all participating sectors and create a platform that reflects this diversity;

• Engage the private sector through both philanthropy and core business models e.g. raising seed funding through initial philanthropy but leveraging the commitment to build a core business model;

• Be responsive to stakeholders' concerns and objectives;

• Create shared responsibility (e.g. shared or alternative chairing of meetings) and give an equal voice to different institutional representatives;

• Promote the platform effectively to generate visibility and impact.

BUILDING BLOCK 6:
Core Competencies

6

One of the primary functions of the multi-stakeholder platform is to create, catalyse and provide services to new development partnerships. Such activities require a high level of competence in both the theory and practice of cross-sector partnering (see figure 5).

Hiring experienced professional partnership brokers and putting in place training and development programmes to develop the necessary knowledge and skill will be part of the overall process of establishing a viable structure, team and procedures for a new platform.

While partnership expertise within the core team is essential, there may also be access to specialist skills within the wider group of members, through connections to facilities set up to support such platforms (including the

Business Partners for Development Facility) or through participation in networks of partnership practitioners. Alternatively it may be necessary to buy in consultancy support services at key times, for example when running 'innovation labs' for which the quality of the facilitation makes all the difference to the quality of the result.

As well as specific skills in partnership brokering, platform staff will need to understand the cultural diversity of different sectors – their core values, modes of operating

CASE STUDY
ALIARSE

One of the main activities in the work and development of ALIARSE is training. This has included building the skills of employees in brokering / negotiating / facilitating, and developing and providing specific joint training courses with other organisations. ALIARSE highlighted that this was an opportunity to develop

further by creating partnership training courses tailored to clients' needs. This recognises that developing the awareness of potential participants on the needs and benefits of partnering was an inherent part of catalysing successful cross-sector partnership outcomes for ALIARSE. Partnering competencies helped create the

platform and contribute to its long-term sustainability as the individuals themselves build and maintain its partnering culture.

MINDSET	**U**NDSERTANDING OF OTHERS	HUMAN RELATIONSHIP **S**KILLS	**T**ECHNICAL PARTNERING KNOWLEDGE
• Humility to realise others may have more appropriate knowledge / resources • Inclination to reach out to work with others • Willingness to give up autonomy of decision-making • (Measured) risk taking • Propensity for innovation • Ability to work for the benefit of the partnership as a whole	• Culture • Interests • Motivations and drivers • Resources and capabilities • Capacity limitations • Legal limitations • AND Understanding of your own!	• Ability to look from others' perspectives • Networking and connecting • Approaching and engaging potential partners / selling ideas • Relationship / trust building • Interest-based negotiation • Facilitation • Communication • Coaching / mentoring • Mediation / conflict resolution / troubleshooting	• Understanding the partnering lifecycle • Key principles of partnering • Best practice approaches to setup and governance • Ability to assess critically when and when not to partner • Internal dynamics of partnering (the partnering "black box": trust, equity and power) • Partnership agreements • Reviewing partnerships • Developing exit strategies

FIGURE 5: **TPI'S 'MUST-HAVE' COMPETENCIES FOR EFFECTIVE PARTNERING**

and reasons for partnering. They will also need to be able to recognise the benefits and the costs of partnering and to understand how to monitor and assess partnership performance, in order to help keep partnerships on track as well as being able to recognise and report success. Finally, much valuable learning can be gained from established alliances and partnerships, and the ability to draw out and disseminate that learning is essential.

In addition to the knowledge and skills required to support partnerships, competencies relating to membership management, financial management, and fundraising will also be required.

We have already stressed the importance of recruiting the core team carefully and that needs to be done within an overall structure that supports people development. As the platform grows, attention should be paid to identifying gaps in skills and knowledge and providing appropriate training. Wherever possible, resources should be found to incentivise staff to enhance their learning and to build the skills and knowledge to meet local needs.

Beyond the core staff, if partnerships are to be successful, those organisations and individuals engaged in partnerships will themselves need to build their skills and competencies for effective partnering. The platforms have a significant role to play here. By offering training to the platform members and others, it can increase the level of partnership understanding and skills among potential partners. This will help both to significantly speed up the process of partnering and also help to ensure that the partnerships developed will be of the highest quality.

BUILDING BLOCK 7:
Membership engagement and management

7

Critical to the success of any platform is the ability of its members to move from initial goodwill to long-term collaboration based on trust and shared objectives. This is why the creation or extension of cross-sector dialogue is a core feature of platform activity. Collaboration across sectors is often hampered by long-standing misconceptions and an absence of mutual respect or trust. It is also constrained by the different working methods and internal cultures of public, private and civil society organisations. Consistent and well-managed dialogue can mitigate many of these problems.

Maintaining the commitment of platform members also means demonstrating clear alignment with both national goals for development (health, education, employment etc.) and with business goals for commercial prosperity and sustainability. The integration of private sector objectives – and expertise – into national and international efforts to meet development targets is an important part of creating an enabling environment for business to operate, establishing better cross-sector dialogue and generating sustainable partnerships for social progress and business sustainability.

Conversely, business clearly articulating its commitment to development goals is an important part of finding an effective role in a platform, building trust with government and civil society and establishing accountability. The focus on national and regional level platforms also creates an opportunity for the inclusion of smaller, local businesses. This is critical to the long-term sustainability of the platform's operations as the mission of the platform must ultimately be "owned" at local level.

The identification of platform champions can be an effective element in developing and retaining engagement from members and other external stakeholders. In the early stages of a new platform the project needs engagement at senior levels in member organisations so that it is seen to have endorsement and support beyond the operational staff. Strong public champions of

the platform will motivate participants, raise wider awareness of the initiative and engage stakeholders in contributing resources or promoting the added value of the platform to others. Strong leadership also needs to be evident in the administration and governance of the platform with boards, committees and secretariats headed by competent and motivating leaders.

The centrality of national government institutions to platform activities was highlighted by respondents in our research who regarded management of government relations as a separate goal from the general management of relations with platform membership. It is important to develop a high level of awareness of government structures and politics and to establish a network of key government officials, to spread risk by working with officials in more than one department. Sharing information on activities and results with public sector contacts will also enhance government buy-in to the platform's work.

In NDPI a number of activities were set up to develop and maintain membership engagement with 172 partners across different sectors. First, it was important to share knowledge and experience to effectively partner with business – it was not about business providing finance. Particular effort was also placed on community engagement through a partnership to give voice to communities across nine states with training for civil society organisations in constructive engagement techniques. Working with government was seen as a particular challenge due to the multitude of agencies with different mandates. Critically, NDPI developed its credibility with each sector through using data and analysis to support their decision-making and engagement. This has enabled NDPI to influence decisions and policy to promote broader support and commitment towards development goals in the Niger Delta.

CHALLENGE

How do we maintain the support of our members and stakeholders?

As the platform moves into maturity, with strong core staffing and a range of ongoing activities, the challenge will be to maintain the support of those essential members and stakeholders whose resources, knowledge and networks are still of high value to the platform. There can be a natural tendency for individuals and institutions to reduce involvement over time, especially in the face of competing interests, and to withdraw commitment before the initiative is fully established.

Constituent elements within this challenge include:

1 How to turn short-term investors into long-term investors;

2 How to go beyond individual support to secure institutional support;

3 How to survive changes in personnel, leadership and champions;

4 How to respond to evolving interests and needs.

Practical steps to be taken to meet this challenge will include:

- Actively engage with stakeholders and members to research their changing needs and offer opportunities for consultation;

- Ensure a visible and consistent advocacy of the platform's achievements;

- Allocate core staff time to managing member relations and mobilising new resources;

- Invest in developing staff skills in order to offer a greater range of high-value services to partnerships;

- Manage internal costs carefully through standardisation of activities, sharing of knowledge and resources with partner organisations and utilising state-of-the-art technology (where appropriate);

- Strive to be seen as a leader in the sector both in terms of expertise and policy development.

8
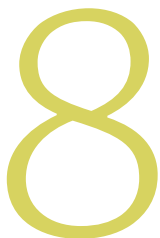
There has been an almost universal recognition in the past decade of the need for better monitoring and evaluation of the many cross-sector partnerships created to support and facilitate development. Research has emphasised the need to move from the initial motivating vision to a process of learning from experience through a systematic monitoring of activities and outcomes. Well-integrated review mechanisms will not only support learning and decision-making for the platform but will also provide important reassurance for national and global stakeholders seeking evidence of value and impact.

Monitoring and evaluation of a platform for partnership should aim to focus on three main areas: the *platform* itself; the *partnerships* it brokers or supports; the overall contribution to *development* goals. Within each of these areas, an evaluation exercise might look at *process* (how are things working?); *outputs* (are goals being met according to plan?) or *impact* (is there evidence of improvement in key social and economic indicators?). It is important here to distinguish clearly between outputs and impact (or 'outcomes'): the former relates only to the formal goals set out in an agreed plan; the latter relates to the bigger issue of the platform's ability to enhance the desired local development goals.

At the level of the platform the members need to define the appropriate indicators both for the process and inputs (e.g. number and diversity of members; number of workshops or meetings held; attendance rate; regularity of communication) and for the outputs (e.g. funding mobilised; new partnerships brokered; existing partnerships supported).

At the level of the partnerships the core management team similarly needs to monitor the process and inputs (number and nature of partners involved; evidence of commitment; plans and agreements; active dialogue) and the outputs (projects initiated; contribution to social and commercial development; potential for scaling-up).

At the level of overall development impact the platform team firstly needs to ensure that the partnerships themselves have adequate M&E mechanisms. It then needs to look at the achievements of the partnerships in relation to the known development goals and to the given role of the platform in helping to achieve those goals. This can be complex but, if possible, the platform members need to know whether the platform is, in practice, delivering added value to the development process.

From the outset, the platform team needs to ensure that members and stakeholders set agreed performance indicators for every partnership project and that adequate resources – both financial and technical – are available to undertake regular monitoring and evaluation. For the core management this may mean initially drawing on external expertise to design and analyse evaluation processes so that an understanding of good practice can be established as part of the platform team's core competencies. Helping new partnerships to embed good M&E practice within their structure should then be seen as part of the value offered by the platform, with evidence from evaluation exercises being used to create shared learning for all stakeholders and project participants.

An example of monitoring and evaluation comes from Project Laser Beam. While M&E was not established at the beginning of the platform, an independent third party (Accenture Development Partnerships) was commissioned early on by PLB to create an evaluation framework tracking investment and contribution to PLB aims. This led to M&E being managed by one of the core partners (GAIN) who now collect data from in-country partners twice a year covering targets, achievements and impact. In addition, these data provide valuable information for partners to discuss, identify reflections and learning at a global level as highlighted in their learning review of PLB activities in 2013.

CHALLENGE

How do we show the difference partnerships and the platforms make?

As partnerships get under way the platform will need to capture and record their progress and achievements. This allows participants to understand how they are doing and to share tips internally but also to communicate back to participating organisations and funders on the difference the platform is making.

Constituent elements within this challenge include:

1 Identifying platform level indicators and targets;

2 Identifying indicators of success for partnerships;

3 Linking platform and partnership activities to development goals/ outcomes.

Practical steps to be taken to meet this challenge will include:

• Identify relevant and appropriate development goals;

• Identify what is success for partners and platform;

• Define and capture indicators in M&E framework:

 – On process e.g. attendance, diversity, commitment

 – On outcomes (relevance, effectiveness, appropriateness, impact)

• Review framework;

• Set aside resources to carry out M&E.

BUILDING BLOCK 9:
Partnership culture

9

Much of what has been presented in the previous eight building blocks assumes that those most closely involved in the platform can build an effective culture of co-operation within and beyond the platform. Accepting the recommendations in each of those sections will maximise the likelihood of this happening but there also needs to be an awareness of the value of embedding partnership values in the everyday work of the platform. This means understanding the risks and benefits that derive from diversity; building trust through openness and shared practical activities; and modelling good practice in the core team's behaviour, which will inform the partnerships that it helps to create and support.

CASE STUDY
BPDF

Creating a partnering culture is not straightforward and often surfaces inherent differences between participants. In BPDF in Zambia, securing buy-in to the platform was deliberately participatory and tailored to the local context. This involved creating a dialogue with partners (rather than a one-size-fits all approach) and providing explanatory materials on the process of partnering. While this process took significant time due to existing cultural silos between public and private sectors, it allowed various partnering values to be built e.g. treating partners as equal, obtaining a trusted facilitator, selecting diverse representation in advisory groups, creating a jointly owned platform. These values were highlighted as important factors in being able to successfully create the platforms. This is just the first step as BPDF prepares to nurture and maintain partnering values supporting staff and partners while it moves into early implementation.

Bringing together actors and institutions from diverse sectors requires a strong motivating vision. All partnerships need a clear set of shared objectives and common goals which will provide an overall vision for the participants and motivate them to contribute commitment and resources to the partnership. A complex, multi-stakeholder platform requires a strong focus around which diverse sectors can mobilise, acknowledging that they might have different reasons for participation but can still have common goals. To facilitate the process of mobilisation, the platform's key stakeholders must define the overall mission of the platform and articulate an inspirational vision of what the platform can achieve. Practical steps taken by actors in our case studies included fully consulting stakeholders and ensuring representativeness on committee or governance structures; embodying the shared vision in written agreements such as a Memorandum of Understanding; and auditing the skills and resources available from platform members in order to identify complementary strengths.

Delivery of the vision has to be supported by strong values: everyone associated with the platform should espouse and embody clear values around which participants can mobilise. Values are not only a key element of the overall vision but a critical contributor to building a demonstrably collaborative culture in the platform.

Trust in partnerships is built, not given. Partners often need to overcome entrenched prejudices or misconceptions about other sectors before they can collaborate freely and this is best done through shared action and the demonstration of strong values. Platform participants frequently emphasise the need to "go the extra mile" in order to achieve objectives and to meet the expectations of their partners. Demonstrating commitment, consistency and reliability will all contribute to the creation of trust between diverse collaborators: those driving and managing the platform need to embody these behaviours themselves in order to build an understanding of partnership culture among their wider membership group.

6 Conclusion

Multi-stakeholder platforms for partnership have been identified as an important mechanism for increasing the engagement of business in development at the country and regional level. More than any other collaborative model, they embody the principles adopted at Busan and enshrined in the UN vision of a post-2015 architecture for development. They offer the potential for intensive, innovative and sustained collaboration from all sectors on issues that are integral both to national development plans and to a flourishing and sustainable private sector. International donors seeking to support platforms for partnership rightly seek value-for-money from their investments and evidence of impact from the initiatives they choose to support.

The current study forms part of the larger "Unleashing the Power of Business" project and, as such, provides insights and guidance on platforms for partnership as a vital component within that larger commitment to transform the role of the private sector in development. There are five main conclusions to draw from this study:

1 All of the platforms included in this study have achieved a degree of success in terms of their stated goals but all have encountered obstacles, often related to the availability of funding and the timescale for achieving implementation. Multi-stakeholder platforms are not the easy option: they have great potential for impact but require long-term stakeholder commitment, sustained resourcing and consistency of personnel;

2 Analysis of existing literature and earlier case studies relating to platforms reveals a high degree of consistency around good practice in creating, managing and sustaining platforms for partnership. Clear principles exist and should be used to inform the thinking of all stakeholders involved in the design, development or funding of new platforms;

3 A set of 'building block' guidelines have been proposed – arising directly from the experience of current platform participants – which should be used to shape the practical management, support and resourcing of future platforms;

4 Despite the value of generic good practice guidelines, attention must also be paid to the local political, social and commercial environment. Partnership models can rarely be directly replicated: they must be tailored to local needs and to local strengths so that they respect the context in which they operate;

5 The long-term sustainability of platform initiatives crucially depends on private sector organisations finding an effective role which enables them to achieve their legitimate business goals while working in partnership with government and civil society. This means identifying opportunities where initial risk can be shared and where there are genuine opportunities for commercial as well as developmental benefits: state and civil society actors need to acknowledge the value of market-based solutions to development challenges.

Annex I: Summary Case Studies

1. AMSTERDAM INITIATIVE ON MALNUTRITION (AIM)

AIM is a cross-sector group brought together to explore partnerships in 2009.

What is the aim of the platform?	The purpose of AIM is to provide a platform to develop innovative and sustainable solutions to malnutrition through collaboration between NGOs, academia, Dutch businesses and government with organizations in economically developing countries.
What does AIM do?	AIM brings global partners together to develop links and implement partnerships with in-country partners (e.g. agribusiness, healthcare, civil society) on 7 work streams: rural retail hubs, milk fortification, food fortification, vegetable supply, nutrition for employees, water and health kiosks (using the Smartlife model), and farm produce quality assessment. The platform offers collective analysis of business and development challenges, information sharing, facilitated dialogue and learning, on-going partnership support and access to finance. This is primarily carried through group calls on a monthly basis with bi-annual face-to-face meetings.
Why was AIM established?	AIM was established to highlight and address the high levels of hidden hunger in developing countries. The aim was to bring together the core capabilities of the different sectors and partners to address malnutrition, particularly in African countries. The founders of the platform hoped to reach 100 million malnourished people in six countries. Activities have now expanded to 9 countries.
Who is involved?	AIM was founded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ICCO, Unilever, DSM (health sciences), AkzoNobel, GAIN and Wageningen University. It has expanded to include a number of international private sector organizations and NGOs (e.g. Rijk Zwaan, WSUP etc) and in-country partners. The government of the Netherlands is the primary donor to AIM with match funding from corporate partners and acts as a partnership broker through its agencies. A secretariat run by GAIN convenes the founding partners and reports progress to the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Core partners participate in the work streams related to their expertise along with at least two local partners.
What has been achieved?	AIM is moving to the early implementation stage. They have built upon a letter of intent to identify planned outputs across the 7 work streams and set up sub-groups where interest has developed. Further funding has catalysed commitment, with organizations reviewing how they can contribute and bring in local partners. This has led AIM to planning and starting to implement 7 practical interventions at all stages of the value chain from seed to retail with 30 companies.

2. ALIARSE

ALIARSE is a Costa Rican foundation established in 2007.

What is the aim of ALIARSE?	The aim of the ALIARSE is to promote and support private-public partnerships that contribute to sustainable development and to equity, through social responsibility.
What does ALIARSE do?	ALIARSE acts as a catalyser for Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) for sustainable development. This involves developing the capacity for working in partnership focusing on health, education and the environment. ALIARSE provides secretariat services and brokers PPPs, carrying out research, providing training and staff exchanges. It focuses on managing the platform, acting as the initiator, coordinator, broker and catalyser.
Why was it established?	ALIARSE was established to increase equity, progress and sustainability through new structures that stimulate co-responsibility in Costa Rica. This responds to changes in the Costa Rican economy due to the financial crisis, questions over the sustainability of the current socio-economic model and political fragmentation.
Who is involved?	ALIARSE was initially resourced by corporate seed money. It is currently funded by a combination of public and private sector funding and is increasingly project funded. ALIARSE has core and support staff that carry out management and technical direction. This is complemented by a steering committee (public and private sector representation) providing strategic direction and a board of directors (private sector and local and national government representation). Projects are used to bring together local and national representative from public and private sectors.
What has been achieved?	In the seven years of operation ALIARSE has progressed to a mature implementation stage. It is becoming increasingly independent with established management and technical staff in all its thematic areas currently involved in partnerships in five key areas. This is based on matching country development needs with business interests, creating clear project plans, using work plans to monitor each partnership and considering the impact of partnerships on development goals.

3. THE BUSINESS PARTNERS FOR DEVELOPMENT FACILITY (BPDF)

BPDF is a global initiative supporting the creation and implementation of platforms or Hubs in-country that can catalyse partnership action

What is the aim of the platform?	The aim of BPDF is to help countries drive the engagement of business in development by systematically promoting and supporting the development of 'win-win' partnerships between companies, international agencies, government and NGOs to achieve business and development goals.
What does BPDF do?	BPDF works at two levels. At the country level, BPDF scopes the demand and potential for a partnership Hub, engages key stakeholders and identifies and works with a potential host to design and seek funding for the Hub. BPDF then supports the development of the Hub including supporting the strategic direction, programming and quality assurance, technical support and building the necessary skills and capacity within the Hub host. At the global level, BPDF acts as a knowledge and support hub for platforms for partnership: facilitating the exchange of knowledge and experience of partnership platforms, developing good practice, for example around M&E of Hubs, and creating shared materials from public-facing introductory guides to partnerships to technical partnering guides for the platform hosts to use.
Why was it established?	The role of business partnerships for development has never been higher up the international agenda. As well as public-private collaboration being seen as an essential mechanism to achieve the post-2015 SDGs, a number of international initiatives have called for enhanced public-private cooperation for development including governments and business signing a Joint Statement at the Busan Forum in 2011 and the creation of the Global Partnership for Economic Development Cooperation. BPDF at the global level was set up to support the essential infrastructure that is required to scale up the use of public-private collaboration. At the national level, the first BPDF Hubs were created in Colombia and Zambia. This has built on established government and donor interest in leveraging the private sector contribution towards broad sustainable development, and on business interest in using its core business and other resources to support the prosperity of the society in which it operates to ensure its own sustainability.
Who is involved?	The BPDF was created by The Partnering Initiative with Sida, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and DFID. At the national level, business, government and civil society have all been strongly engaged in developing the Hubs and serve on its advisory group. The BIDF is hosted by the National Business Association of Colombia in Colombia, and by the African Management Services Company in Zambia.
What has been achieved?	So far, BPDF has supported the development of Hubs in Colombia and Zambia, with plans to support a further 6-8 Hubs in the next two years. The Hub in Colombia was launched in January 2014 and is currently supporting around 30 collaborative initiatives. In Zambia, the Hub has recently begun implementation with a number of dedicated brokers supporting around entrepreneurship in mining, agriculture, skills development and job creation.

4. MUSIKA

Musika is a Zambian non-profit organisation established in 2011.

What is the aim of Musika?	The aim of Musika is to improve the livelihoods of small-holder farmers across Zambia. They aim to achieve this through supporting the development of the agricultural private sector via technical services and subsidies to change the practices of existing agriculture companies who want to work with small-holder farmers. Thus, they support the creation of private-private partnerships.
What does Musika do?	Musika provides three broad services: 1.Technical assistance to private sector organisations; 2. Access to resources to catalyse change in private sector practices; 3. Brokering between the private sector and communities. This is carried out over six types of agriculture activities to promote links between larger corporate private sector organisations and small-holder farmers. This covers agriculture inputs (e.g. seed, fertiliser and agro-chemicals), outputs (e.g. out-grower schemes, assured markets), service markets (e.g. vets, machinery leasing), financial markets (e.g. equipment leasing credit products), environmentally friendly products (e.g. renewable energy) and business enabling environment (supporting agricultural industry associations' interactions with government).
Why was it established?	Musika was established at the end of a USAID value chain programme PROFIT (Production, Finance and Improve Technology) in Zambia. Those implementing PROFIT wanted to build on its prior success and existing relations by focusing on developing the agricultural sector through stimulating and supporting private sector investment in small-holder farmers.
Who is involved?	Musika is owned by six Zambian agriculture-related institutions representing agriculture associations, trade unions and research institutes. Musika is supported by the UK government and the Embassy of Sweden and is recognised as a Making Markets work for the Poor (M4P) programme. Internally there is a hierarchical structure with staff accountable to senior management, the managing director, board of directors then the subscribers/ owners. Externally, Musika is developing partnerships with both multi-national and local private sector organizations (e.g. BASF, Pioneer, ZAMACE).
What has been achieved?	In the three years of functioning Musika has progressed to an early/mature implementation stage. The input agricultural sector is the most established with other areas of operation at an early implementation stage. This has led to reaching 100,000 small-holders and 40 private sector organisations.

5. PARTNERS FORUM FOR ACTION ON CHRONIC NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The Partners Forum is a Trinidad and Tobago group established in 2011 for an initial period of 2 years.

What is the aim of Partners for Action?	The aim of the Partners for Action is to act as both a catalyst and a mechanism for multi-sector action to promote health and reduce chronic non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in Trinidad and Tobago.
What do the Partners for Action do?	The Partners for Action build and develop a cross-sector approach to reducing non-communicable diseases. This involves establishing joint planning and coordinated implementation across public and private sectors, identifying and sharing best practice, and mobilising resources (political will, finance, community involvement etc) to support joint actions. They also are building a repository of evidence on reducing non-communicable diseases and are developing standards/ policies for government and industry.
Why was it established?	The Partners for Action was established by the Cabinet of the Trinidad and Tobago government. This was in response to recognising that the prevalence and mortality rates of chronic non-communicable diseases are among the highest in the world in the Caribbean. A multi-stakeholder approach was then setup with it being the first to commit to participating in the Pan-American Forum for Action on NCDs (PAFNCD) setup by the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO). This multi-stakeholder approach is also in-line with various international charters and declarations.[9]
Who is involved?	There is cross-sector representation in the Partners for Action based on invites from the Trinidad and Tobago government. Participation is in-kind with a financial honorarium provided to organisations by the secretariat. The Ministry of Health provides the secretariat, NGOs contribute their experience in supporting individuals with NCDs and provide communication links with the public, the private sector contributes recognition of the importance of the issue, that they were willing to learn about NCDs and change how they developed their products. This is also supported at the international level by PAHO, WHO, the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI) and the University of West Indies who provide technical advice and support.
What has been achieved?	In the two years of functioning the Partners for Action has progressed to an early implementation stage. Terms of reference were established, work streams and committees were setup to develop a standard indicator on trans-fats, funds identified for further research and a number of public events were held to share learning, create buy-in, change product formulations and promote healthier lifestyles.

6. THE NIGER DELTA PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE (NDPI)

The Niger Delta Partnership Initiative is a partnership established in 2010 by Chevron Corporation creating a strategic foundation in the USA (NDPI Foundation) and an implementation foundation in Nigeria (PIND Foundation).

What is the aim of the platform?	The aim of NDPI is to establish innovative multi-stakeholder partnerships that empower communities to achieve a peaceful and enabling environment for equitable economic growth in the Niger Delta.
What does NDPI do?	NDPI provides access to finance, dialogue between public and private sectors and civil society, and acts as an information hub. It focuses on four key programme areas: Economic Development, Capacity Building, Peace Building, and Analysis and Advocacy. In particular, PIND supports partnership activity through its two Economic Development Centers (EDC). The EDCs act as resource and coordination hubs for development programs and partners in the Niger Delta. They provide a broad range of support for PIND's programs and other development partners (including USAID, DFID, U.S. African Development Foundation [USADF] and Chevron Nigeria Ltd).
Why was it established?	The Niger Delta's vast natural resources generate more than 75% of Nigeria's export earnings, yet 43% of its population of 32 million live below the poverty line. Persistent poverty and high levels of conflict and corruption fuel inter-ethnic conflict and pose serious risks for companies doing business in the region. NDPI and PIND were established to address the need for all sectors to collaborate to create a more stable environment for communities and business.
Who is involved?	The NDPI was setup by Chevron Corporation working with bi-lateral and multi-lateral donor agencies, Nigerian federal and state government agencies, other private sector organisations and civil society organisations. Chevron Corporation provided an initial amount of seed funding with donor partners match funding.
What has been achieved?	PIND is in the mature implementation phase of its lifecycle. Since starting in 2010, projects have been implemented in all four PIND programme areas. Programme results are recorded, reviewed and then programmes are developed. Funding goals have been met and its activities and physical presence are drawing additional resources and donor agency programmes into the region. Specifically, this has involved supporting 10,202 direct beneficiaries, working with 155 organizations, supporting 93 local businesses and training 414 local business representatives.

9. Bangkok Charter on Health Promotion (2005), the UN declaration on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (2011) and resolutions 3, 5, 7 of the declaration of the Port-of-Spain (2007) from the heads of the Caribbean Community

7. PROJECT LASER BEAM (PLB)

Project Laser Beam is a five year, multi-million dollar public-private partnership launched in 2009

What is the aim of the platform?	The aim of Project Laser Beam is to create a scalable, replicable and sustainable model to significantly reduce child under-nutrition in targeted regions in Bangladesh and Indonesia. This involves bringing together expertise from UN and other public agencies with Fortune 500 companies to work together with governments, NGOs and local companies to collectively find new solutions to persisting problems in the area of child under nutrition.
What does PLB do?	PLB implements interventions to tackle child under-nutrition by addressing both direct and underlying causes of under-nutrition across 4 pillars of interventions (food and micronutrients; water and sanitation; health & hygiene; food security and income generation). PLB's holistic approach covers a variety of interventions e.g. providing high nutrient school food, homestead farming, hand-washing, empowering women through job opportunities. Design and planning of interventions are carried out by global partners, with implementation of activities done by partners based in-country. Interventions build on both market and non-market based nutritional solutions, drawing partners together to provide a holistic response to child under-nutrition.
Why was it established?	PLB was established to respond to high levels of chronic under-nutrition in children through bringing together public and private sectors skills and experiences. Investing in nutrition is seen as an investment in healthy and nourished children. PLB uses existing knowledge and technology to deliver products and services and to create new ones. It leverages the comparative value of public and private sector actors for the long-term benefit of malnourished children by creating new methods and markets.
Who is involved?	PLB was initiated at the global level by Unilever, The World Food Programme (WFP), Kraft Foods (now Mondelēz International Foundation), DSM and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition. PLB is a CEO globally-led initiative that evolved into involving in-country organisations to develop and implement interventions. In-country, PLB involves a range of locally-based NGOs (e.g. BRAC, WaterAid) and private sector organizations (e.g. GarudaFood) to provide holistic interventions towards addressing under-nutrition in children. PLB is managed by a neutral third party (Accenture Development Partnerships)
What has been achieved?	PLB is at the mature implementation stage. The partnerships in each country focus on delivering a holistic response to malnutrition with multiple interventions over specific geographic areas. Over 10 partnerships were created with locally based organizations in Bangladesh with 5 in Indonesia. Through its interventions to date it is estimated that it has reached a total of 1.4 million people in Satkhira, Bangladesh, and 400,000 people in the NTT, Indonesia. PLB will finish at the end of 2014 but global partner organizations aim to continue their collaborations within the Scaling up Nutrition (SUN) Business Network.

8. THE SOUTHERN AGRICULTURE GROWTH CORRIDOR OF TANZANIA (SAGCOT)

SAGCOT is a Tanzanian public-private platform initiated in 2010.

What is the aim of the platform?	The aim of SAGCOT is to transform agriculture in Tanzania's Southern Corridor through bringing 350,000 ha of arable land into profitable production, supporting tens of thousands of farmers to gain access to a sustainable commercial livelihood and lifting millions out of poverty. SAGCOT Partners aim to generate USD 1.2 Billion of agricultural revenue from the region by 2035.
What does SAGCOT do?	SAGOT provides a dedicated secretariat and forum to facilitate dialogue and catalyse new public and private sector investments in the corridor. SAGCOT aims to achieve its goals by catalysing inclusive private sector led agriculture development in the region. Partners commit to contributing to the SAGCOT goals by jointly developing end-to-end value chains that engage with a large number of smallholders, by exploring opportunities for innovative finance, creating synergies, and addressing policy bottlenecks. Partners also commit to sustainable approaches in support of SAGCOT's green growth strategy.
Why was it established?	SAGCOT was established in 2010 to meet the need to accelerate private sector investments, whilst ensuring that investments lead to sustainable development and poverty reduction in the corridor. Tanzania's southern corridor benefits from good 'backbone' infrastructure that passes through some of the richest farmland in Africa. The area has the potential to become a breadbasket of regional and global importance. Today, however, its agricultural potential is largely dormant (less than 24% is under production) and the majority of the rural population remains poor and food insecure. SAGCOT is a response to Tanzania's Kilimo Kwanza (Agriculture First) effort to mobilize private sector support for agriculture development and builds on global attention for increased food security – voiced at the G8 commitment in L'Aquila and the World Economic Forum's New Vision for Agriculture (both 2009).
Who is involved?	SAGCOT was started by a multi-sector group including the government of Tanzania, bi-lateral and multi-lateral donor agencies, the private sector, farmer organizations, foundations and civil society. The partnership is supported by the SAGCOT Centre, a dedicated secretariat that facilitates dialogue and catalyses new public and private sector investments in the corridor. SAGCOT will launch a USD 100 million Catalytic Trust Fund next year to provide bridging finance for commercially viable agricultural businesses and to support smallholder farmers inclusion in nucleus farm models and commercial value chains.
What has been achieved?	At the African Forum in Paris SAGCOT was identified as one of 100 innovations for Sustainable Development that will transform Africa by the French Government. SAGCOT has established its organizational setup and is at the early implementation phase. SAGCOT has 46 Partners (including the government, development partners, 15 companies and associations) who have committed support to Tanzania's agricultural development under the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition at the G8 in 2012. The pledges total USD 1 billion of public and private investments. SAGCOT is currently concentrating on translating these pledges into actual investments.

9. THE NATIONAL PLATFORM FOR RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTION AND TRADE OF PINEAPPLES

The national platform for the responsible production and trade of pineapples was established in 2010 in Costa Rica.

What is the aim of the platform?	The aim of the Pineapple platform is to establish a multi-stakeholder and inter-institutional dialogue to create a joint action plan with tangible solutions to reduce the negative environmental and social impacts of pineapple production in Costa Rica.
What does the platform do?	The Pineapple platform provides a space to convene stakeholders to share knowledge and create new partnerships around the pineapple production process. In the platform, participants have focused on developing a national strategy for sustainable commodity production and trade, creating working groups to analyse and discuss solutions, documenting case studies, creating capacity building programs for public and private sector organizations and proposing policy reform recommendations.
Why was it established?	Pineapple is one of the most important non-traditional products that Costa Rica exports, providing around 50% of the European and US markets. However, there are negative environmental impacts in the production process (e.g. agrochemical run off into water sources, high levels of soil erosion and violations of trade union rights by some plantation owners). This platform was established to create a joint effort from all stakeholders to reduce the environmental impact of the pineapple production process.
Who is involved?	The Platform is facilitated by UNDP and is hosted by the Government of Costa Rica. Stakeholders represent each sector including academia (e.g. University of Costa Rica and National University), industry (e.g. Chiquita Brands, Del Monte, Dole, Tesco and Wal-Mart), community groups and civil society.
	In the first phase the platform was supported by the Inter-Church Association for Development Cooperation (ICCO) and they are currently developing funding for the second phase. The Pineapple Platform is part of the UNDP´s Green Commodities Programme (GCP) and developed based on the experience of similar initiatives such as the Cocoa Livelihoods in Dominican Republic, Ghana Cocoa Platform and Palm Oil in Indonesia.
What has been achieved?	Starting in 2010, the Pineapple platform is now in the early implementation stage having developed an action plan setting out implementation activities. So far, this has promoted the alignment of organizations to help implement the proposed actions through six partnerships e.g. the University of Costa Rica and Abengoa working together to study electricity generation from pineapple crop residues.

Annex II: Bibliography

Bezanson, K.A. and Isenman, P. (2012) *Governance of New Global Partnerships: Challenges, Weaknesses and Lessons,* Centre for Global Development, Policy Paper 014, October 2012

Binder A., Pallenberg M. and Witte J.M. (2007) *Engaging Business in Development: Results of an international benchmarking study,* GPPi Research Paper Series No.8, Berlin: Global Public Policy Institute

BMZ (German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development) *Responsible & Inclusive Business Hubs (RIBH) Latin America, MENA, SEA,* Berlin: BMZ, Future Makers & GIZ

Bulloch, G., Lacy, P. and Jurgens, C. (2011) *Convergence Economy: Rethinking international development in a converging world,* London: Accenture Development Partnerships

Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (2011), *Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness,* Busan, North Korea, 1 December 2011

Caplan, K. (2003) 'The Purist's Partnership: Debunking the terminology of partnerships' in Partnership Matters Issue 1, Copenhagen: The Copenhagen Centre

Davies, P. (2011) *The Role of the Private Sector in the Context of Aid Effectiveness,* Consultative Findings Document prepared for the OECD Development Assistance Committee, February 2011

Ewington, N., Reid, S., Spencer-Oatey, H. And Stadler, S. (2009) *The Global People Toolbook: Managing the life-cycle of intercultural partnerships,* Warwick Occasional Papers in Applied Linguistics #2, University of Warwick

GIZ (not dated) *Cooperation with the Private Sector: Partnership Landscape Analysis* Africa Department Factsheet for the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

GIZ (2011) *Poverty-oriented Planning & Reporting for Development Partnerships,* Bonn: GIZ for the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

Globescan/SustainAbility (2012) *Collaborating for a sustainable future* A Globescan/Sustainability Survey

Gradl, C. and Jenkins, B. (2011). *Tackling Barriers to Scale: From Inclusive Business Models to Inclusive Business Ecosystems.* CSR Initiative Report No. 47. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Kennedy School.

Gutierrez, R. (2013) 'Organizational and Network Structures to Further Regional Development: Hypotheses to Explain their Low Impact' in *Annual Review of Social Partnerships* Issue 8 2013, London.

Hanleybrown, F., J. Kania & M. Kramer (2012) Channeling Change: Making Collective Impact Work *Stanford Social Innovation Review,* Winter 2012, pp. 1-8.

International Chamber of Commerce (2013) *ICC Perspectives on the Post-2015 Development Agenda,* Paris: International Chamber of Commerce

Jenkins, B. (2012) *Mobilizing the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania,* Cambridge, MA: The CSR Initiative at the Harvard Kennedy School

Kania, J. and Kolk, A. (2013). Partnerships as panacea for addressing global problems? On rationale, context, actors, impact and limitations. In M. Seitanidi & A. Crane (Eds.), *Social Partnerships and Responsible Business: A Research Handbook,* Routledge

Lewin K. (1943). Defining the "Field at a Given Time." *Psychological Review.* 50: 292–310. Republished in *Resolving Social Conflicts & Field Theory in Social Science,* Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 1997

Nelson, J., Torres-Rahman, Z. and Kramer, M. (2011) Collective Impact *Stamford Social Innovation Review,* Winter 2011

Patscheke, S., Barmettler, A., Herman, L. Overdyke, S. and Pfitzer, M. (2014) Shaping Global Partnerships for a post-2015 World *Stamford Social Innovation Review* http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/shaping_global_partnerships_for_a_post_2015_world Accessed 13 March 2014

Prescott, D., Stibbe, D. (2014) *Unleashing the Power of Business: A practical Roadmap to scale up the engagement of business as a partner in development,* The Partnering Initiative, presented at the 1st High Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, Mexico City, April 2014

Oglesby, R. & Burke, J. (2012) *Platforms for Private Sector-Humanitarian Collaboration,* Humanitarian Futures Programme, King's College London

Peters, A. and Gradl, C. (2011) *Partners in Development: How donors can better engage the private sector for development in LDCs,* UN Global Compact, UNDP and Bertelsmann Stiftung

Reid, S. (2009a) A Learning Process Model for Intercultural Partnerships *Warwick University Occasional Papers in Applied Linguistics No. 4*

Reid, S. (2009b) The Learning Process in Intercultural Collaboration: Evidence from the eChina-UK Programme *Warwick University Occasional Papers in Applied Linguistics No. 5*

Reid, S., Stadler, S., and Spencer-Oatey, H. (2009), Intercultural Effectiveness in Global Education Partnerships *Warwick University Occasional Papers in Applied Linguistics No. 1*

Rein, M., Stott, L., Yambayamba, K., Hardman, S. and Reid, S. (2005) *Working Together: A critical analysis of cross-sector partnerships in southern Africa* Cambridge: University of Cambridge Programme for Industry

Stibbe, D. (2013) *A New Global Partnership with Business: building a post-2015 development framework to achieve sustainable prosperity in Africa,* Business Action for Africa, Harvard Kennedy School and The Partnering Initiative.

Stott, L, and Keatman, T. (2005) *Tools for Exploring Community engagement in Partnerships,* Practitioner Note, Building Partnerships for Development in Water and Sanitation (BPD), London

Tennyson, R. (2005) *The Brokering Guidebook,* London: International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF)

Tennyson, R. And Wilde, L. (2005) *The Guiding Hand,* London and Geneva: IBLF and United Nations Staff College

The Partnering Initiative / International Business Leaders Forum (2010) *Guide to Partnership Building,* prepared for the Private Sector Division, Partnership Bureau, UNDP, New York: UNDP

The Partnering Initiative (2013), *Creating the Zambia Business in Development Facility – Scoping Report & Recommendations,* Prepared for Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) on behalf of the Business in Development Facility partners

Turner, S., Merchant, K., Kania, J. and Martin, E. (2012) Understanding the Value of Backbone Organizations in Collective Impact, Parts 1-4, July 17-July 20 2012 *Stamford Social Innovation Review* www.ssireview.org/blog/entry/understanding_the_value_of_backbone_organizations_in_collective_impact accessed 13 March 2014

UNDP (2008). *Creating Value for All: Strategies for Doing Business with the Poor,* online at http://www.undp.org/gimlaunch/docs/GIM%20Report%20Final%20August%202008.pdf.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Green Commodities Facility, National Sustainable Commodity Platforms

United Nations Global Compact (2013) *Building the post-2015 Business Engagement Architecture,* New York: UNGC Office

Wood, B., Betts, J., Etta, F., Gayfer, J., Kabell, D., Ngwira, N., Sagasti, F., Samaranayake, M.(2011) *The Evaluation of the Paris Declaration, Final Report,* Copenhagen, Danish Institute for International Studies, May 2011

World Vision International (2013) *Business – a vital contributor to the post-2015 agenda,* The Post-2015 Agenda: Policy Brief #7, World Vision International

the
partnering
initiative

ABOUT THE PARTNERING INITIATIVE

The Partnering Initiative (TPI) is an international NGO dedicated to driving widespread, effective collaboration between civil society, government and companies towards societal innovation and sustainable development.

For over a decade, TPI has pioneered the development of the theory and practice of cross-sector partnering, working with leading global organisations from all societal sectors to support their partnering strategies and approach and in developing multi-stakeholder programmes to scale up partnership action worldwide.

The Partnering Initiative | The Old Music Hall | 106-108 Cowley Road | Oxford OX4 1JE | UK

Web: partnerinit.org | Email: info@partnerinit.org