PARTNERSHIPS IN SECTOR-WIDE PROGRAMMING IN EDUCATION IN TANZANIA: NARRATIVES OF EXPERIENCE

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Dedication

Parents are our frontline educators. They are the quintessential stakeholders in our education systems. This thesis, with all due humility, is dedicated to all those parents, including mine, Arukaino and Clarke Okah, who, despite all the challenges, found and are finding ways of motivating and instilling in their children the joy of learning. To them a profound salute is due!

Acknowledgements

When one embarks on a journey and enterprise of this kind, one tends to go about it almost single-mindedly and quite selfishly too insofar as one's time is concerned, *alienating* friends and family in the process. In my case, a bit of anti-social behaviour did set in although I was very proud of my self-imposed discipline and the focus it generated and sustained. Nevertheless, as inconvenienced and forgotten as these friends and family were, not to mention the countless number of times that I said *no* to what would normally have been an easy *obligation* on my part, they seemed genuinely interested in what I was doing and urged me on. It made the *I'm tied up* process a lot easier to handle. I thank them very much for their patience, tolerance and unflinching support.

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consideration and direction were instrumental in much of the progress that I made earlier in my studies and, later, the most capable hands (i.e., my Committee and supervisors) in which I found myself for the remainder of my work. To him goes my heartfelt gratitude.

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Abstract

Partnership, the pre-eminent buzzword of the last two decades, is still very much the mantra in development cooperation discourse, at least in the North, as we begin the new millennium. This posthoc retrospective study is an insider's account of personal experience in participating and observing the development of Tanzania's Education Sector Development Program over a one-year period in 1998-1999. The study interrogates the workings of Donor-Government partnerships within this setting in an attempt to unravel the realities on the ground in their relationships and how the power asymmetry between these principal actors and their concomitant behaviour served to *subvert* the effectiveness and sustainability of the partnership.

This study in development anthropology is scaffolded by the epistemic orientation of postmodern theories. The approaches adopted for constructing and telling the stories that are narrated are borrowed from the interpretive anthropology of Clifford Geertz and the postmodern anthropology of James Clifford. Looking back and recollecting and reconstructing events required the generation of enabling memories, for which the memory-work method was adapted and used

The study reveals that the hegemonic rituals that characterized development interventions in Tanzania bordered more on patronage than on partnership. Partnership was very much valued in principle by all parties but when the chips were down, it seemed ownership and trust, two key concepts undergirding partnership, were casualties in the complex dance of cooperation that the *contending* parties engaged in. They dealt with each other politely but suspicion and mistrust were mutual at the level of Donor-Government and in situ Centre-Periphery relationships.

A modest proposal is advanced for understanding the broader context of a Donor-Government relationship; it attempts to relate operational and policy horizontality to include a more vertical consultative process involving civil society at large, particularly affected communities, NGOs and the private sector as a means of engendering a more effective and sustainable partnership between donors and recipient[1] countries.

[1] The normative perspective in particular on North-South relations rejects *recipient* as an appropriate descriptive term for a developing country receiving aid. For them, it connotes a superiority complex embedded in a language of welfarism. Throughout this thesis, I use *recipient* simply to convey a *brutal* reality: development assistance involves an element of charity and in the North-South relationship, generally, one party *gives* and the other *receives*, with the giver in a much stronger position to lay down conditions for the aid being offered.

Résumé

Le partenariat – mot très à la mode au cours des deux dernières décennies – demeure le leitmotiv du discours du développement en coopération, à tout le moins au Nord, en ce début de nouveau millénaire. Cette étude rétrospective, effectuée en 1998-1999 sur une période d'une année, est le compte-rendu d'expériences personnelles qui s'appuient sur la participation à la mise en place du programme de développement du secteur de l'éducation en Tanzanie. L'étude remet en question le fonctionnement des partenariats avec les gouvernements donateurs et tente de révéler les réalités sur le terrain des relations donateur-récipiendaire, tout en montrant comment les forces inégales des principaux acteurs et leurs comportements mutuels nuisent à l'efficacité et à la durabilité du partenariat.

Cette étude de l'anthropologie du développement est structurée selon l'orientation épistémique des théories postmoderne . Les méthodes utilisées pour élaborer et raconter les histoires ont été empruntés à l'anthropologie interprétative de Clifford Geertz ainsi qu'à l'anthropologie postmoderne de James Clifford. La méthode «mémoire-travail» a été adaptée et utilisée pour reconstruire et revenir sur les événements.

L'étude montre que les rituels hégémoniques qui caractérisaient les interventions en faveur du développement en Tanzanie penchaient plutôt du côté du patronage que du côté du partenariat. Le concept de partenariat était très valorisé en principe par tous les intéressés, mais en pratique il semble que le sentiment de propriété et la confiance, deux fondements du partenariat, faisaient les frais de la dynamique de coopération instituée.

Les parties impliquées agissaient entre elles avec politesse mais la suspicion et le manque de confiance étaient mutuels au niveau des relations donateur-récipiendaire et des relations centre-périphérie.

Une modeste structure est proposée pour comprendre le contexte plus large de la relation donateur-récipiendaire. Cette structure tente de faire le lien entre, à l'horizontale, les opérations et les politiques, afin d'inclure, à la verticale, un processus consultatif qui comprend la société civile dans son ensemble, particulièrement les communautés affectées, les ONG et le secteur privé en vue d'engendrer un partenariat plus efficace et plus durable entre les pays donateurs et récipiendaires.[2]

[2] La perspective normative, en particulier dans le domaine des relations Nord-Sud, considère inadéquate l'expression « pays receveur » lorsqu'il s'agit de parler d'un pays en voie de développement qui reçoit de l'aide. Selon ce point de vue, le terme témoigne d'une attitude de supériorité inhérente au concept de l'État-providence. Dans cette thèse, j'ai utilisé le mot « receveur » simplement pour faire ressortir la dure réalité : l'assistance en développement implique un élément de charité, or, dans la relation entre le Nord et le Sud, en général, l'une des parties *donne* et l'autre *reçoit* – et le donneur se trouve en position de force pour imposer ses conditions en échange de l'aide offerte.

A Table and a Figure

Table

Figure

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CG or c-group	Consultative Group
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DCP	Development Cooperation Practitioner
DfID	Department for International Development
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program
EU	European Union
FINNIDA	Finnish International Development Agency
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MoEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
MoRALG	Ministry of Regional Administration and Local Government
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NGI	Non-Governmental Institution
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SDP	Sector Development Program
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SIP	Sector Investment Program
SWAp	Sector-Wide Approach to Programming
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank

Prologue

When I took up an assignment in 1998 to go to Tanzania for a year and develop a country basic education strategy for CIDA, memories of my first personal encounter with foreign aid flashed through my mind. I wondered what particular set of attitudes would greet me and what the relationship between the donor community and its host government would be.

At the age of 22, I was formally introduced to the foreign aid industry when I was hired in 1968 by CUSO[3] in Nigeria as a personal assistant to its Coordinator for Nigeria. I handled administrative odds and ends, including secretarial and book-keeping duties, thus freeing the Coordinator to spend more time in the field. The British Voluntary Service Overseas and American Peace Corps were well known in Nigeria at the time but CUSO, although it had been in the country since the early 1960s, was hardly known. In fact, I had not heard of CUSO until a former boss at the British Council recommended me to his friend at CUSO for the office job. But recalling my Grade 5 world economic geography class and concepts such as the Prairies of North America, Canada held a particular romantic fascination for me. I looked forward to working for this little known organization and wondered what CUSO was really about.

It was not long before I realized what an important instrument of international cooperation and understanding CUSO was. By 1972, I had been appointed CUSO's first

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[3] CUSO once stood for Canadian University Service Overseas. It is now simply called CUSO. The organization is no longer strictly university-based in terms of the people it recruits and because there was considerable *goodwill* already associated with the acronym and as such a name change was not desired, it was decided to keep CUSO as the organization's full and proper name.

host national field staff officer and began my new job as the organization's Deputy Coordinator for Nigeria.

CUSO brought in mostly volunteer teachers who were posted on two-year tours of duty to secondary schools, sometimes in remote rural areas where Nigerians themselves were unwilling or reluctant to serve. The volunteers were paid the same as a new Nigerian university graduate. This had the salutary effect of *nativizing* and *humbling* the volunteers and thus giving them a greater appreciation of life as some marginally *well-to-do* Nigerians lived it. Some volunteers agonized over why they were there at all, taking jobs that Nigerians would not do. As they saw it, that was not development. Others would counter with the argument that they had the choice of serving in remote parts of Canada but chose to come to Nigeria. That fundamental freedom of choice should not be the exclusive preserve of Canadians. It should apply to Nigerians as well.

For me, I observed something else. The volunteers probably gained more than they gave. Many returned home with a new lease on life, so to speak, and with a savvy outlook and maturity that must have impressed their parents and friends. Some of these volunteers at the tender age of about 23 found themselves, occasionally, in the temporary absence of their school principals, running a boarding school of several hundred boys and/or girls. It is a responsibility that no 23-year-old would experience in Canada. That got me thinking.

What if CUSO were to recruit Nigerians and place them in a state other than their own and eventually extend it to recruiting Africans for placement in countries other than their own. That would be a great service I reckoned in a country and continent where people hardly knew what was happening in other parts of their country, a country with a

rich diversity of cultures, or their continent. Unless they were in the diplomatic service, many Africans at the time only had the opportunity to meet the diversity of other Africans during their studies abroad. Imagine what contribution CUSO could make to Nigerians' cross-cultural sensitivity and understanding of each other and the promotion of international understanding at a people-to-people level amongst Africans. With the intra-Africa exchange of volunteers, governments could provide support, for example, through reduced airfares on national airlines and the private sector could be cajoled into contributing services, products or cash as well. Wouldn't that be a great partnership? But it was all wishful thinking. CUSO's mandate at the time was strictly to recruit and expose Canadians to development overseas.

Like CUSO, donor agencies have their specific mandates, projected off their domestic and foreign policy configurations. These are not negotiable. They are a given and do inform what they do overseas in developing countries. My pre-departure research in 1998 indicated that virtually all the donors were either involved or interested only in basic (i.e., primary) education. Yet, they were clamouring for a *sector-wide approach to programming* (SWAp) in education that would involve extensive work and consultancies, not to mention the expense, on secondary education, teacher education, technical and vocational education, and tertiary education with donor interest and money targeted only at the primary education sub-sector. How would the other sub-sectors react? Would there be a massive lobby or a complete lack of interest? How long would this process take? More importantly, how would the Government of Tanzania, which needed all the help it could get, respond to the push for a SWAp from the donor community? What would the working relationship between the donors and Government be like? As I

prepared to leave for Tanzania, these were the kind of questions that exercised my curiosity and interest.

This thesis is about my reflection on the Donor-Government partnership environment in Tanzania as the country's education sector-wide program was being developed during the 1998-to-1999 period. I hope fellow development cooperation practitioners find it helpful in reflecting upon their own practice, particularly what it means to be in a partnership. It is also my hope that scholarly researchers will find the subject of *Official Development Assistance* partnerships important and interesting enough to devote their time and resources to studying it systematically.

Chapter 1

Introduction and Background to the Study

Preamble[4]

CIDA's country programming framework for Tanzania (CIDA, 1997) has inscribed prominently on its cover the motto "Tufanye kazi pamoja," Kiswahili for "Let us work together." This attractive sentiment is a call to solidarity and an empathetic and purposeful invitation to partnership being extended to its constituent organizations and institutions in Canada and not least the Government of Tanzania and its people.

Partnership is very much front and centre in the discourse on development cooperation as we begin the new millennium, witness the *New Partnership for Africa's Development.*[5] The seeming ambiguity of this buzzword of a concept, however, has caused a good deal of skepticism on the part of some researchers who have, for example, variously described the concept as a "code word," a "partial euphemism and a token of political negotiation" (Mackintosh, 1992, p. 210); a "public relations hype" (Bailey, 1994, p. 293); and "the word of the week," and "an obsession" (Torjman, 1998, p. 2). Given the breadth and depth of current usage (and possible misuse and abuse), partnership has not only survived as the buzzword of the 1980s and 1990s, it still remains the pre-eminent buzzword of the new millennium and the mantra in development cooperation discourse. Flowing from it are other concepts such as ownership, trust, coordination, transparency, accountability, and so forth. The first two concepts –

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[4] The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.) guidelines on headings and subheadings, pagination, citations, quotations, etc., are used throughout this thesis. Where references are cited from internet sources, page numbers are not provided.

[5] This partnership idea, more commonly referred to as NEPAD, was initiated by five African leaders (representing Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa) and adopted by African states as a means of striking a new relationship with the West and amongst themselves in fostering Africa's development. It was the focus of the 2002 G-8 Summit hosted by Canada in Kananaskis.

ownership and trust - are considered to be critical for the success of Donor-Government partnerships. Their contextual complexities and underlying importance in strengthening or weakening partnerships are probed in this study and constitute the themes around which I tell and narrate the stories that I present in Chapter 4.

In this introductory chapter, I aim to put the rest of the thesis in bounded context, looking at the why-and-how of the study and the partnership problematique in SWAp arrangements. Some of the epistemic considerations that informed my approach to the study and my role as development cooperation practitioner-researcher are also discussed. The rest of the thesis deals with a review of the literature on partnership, the constructing and telling of the stories from the field that are narrated, and the usefulness and implications of the study. I begin with the context for the study.

Context, Biography and Focus of the Study

The focus of this post-hoc, retrospective study is in exploring the partnership between Donors and the Government of Tanzania within the context of their deliberations on the development of an education sector program during the period of my stay in Tanzania from October 1998 to September 1999. The program was a sector-wide arrangement designed to pool donor financing in support of mutually-agreed programs, their implementation and spending objectives. In undertaking the exploration, my task was to weave narrative nets to capture the nature of the environment within which Donor-Government relationships were manifested in the Tanzanian case. Reality is configured. It is through social construction that reality is accessible (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Walsham, 1995; Cantrell, 2002; Myers 2002). The accounts and interpretations that I render in this study are aimed at engendering an understanding of the phenomenon of

personal experience of particular settings through the meanings that I construct from my experience of the experience.

In a self-reflexive and retrospective fashion, and writing as a development cooperation practitioner, I interpret some of the events that happened in the course of Donors and the Government working together on the development of a program for the education sector. In such a setting, it is natural that tensions and contestations will emerge, self-interest may rear its head and motivate action and positions taken, power and influence are exercised, and of course the efforts that people make, at the personal and organizational levels, at resolving conflicts and reaching some agreement. In constructing my interpretations, I focus more specifically on the issues of ownership and trust (these concepts are reviewed in the next chapter). Within this scope of attention, I examine the difficulties that frustrate Donor-Government partnerships and their implications for a sustainable and effective partnership.[6]

I arrived in Tanzania in the fall of 1998 as a consulting education advisor to CIDA with the principal task of developing a country basic education strategy for the Agency. Over the next twelve months of my stay, I travelled the country extensively and consulted widely. I was CIDA's *technical* ears and eyes on the ground. Part of my job was to deeply understand and appreciate the local socio-economic and education provision context, the many reforms that were taking place, what other donors were doing or planning to do, and to find a niche for CIDA's potential intervention in the basic education sub-sector. I was to pay particular attention to developments in the evolving

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[6] The words *effective* and *sustainable*[partnership(s)] are used to denote a working relationship, in a prevailing environment of trust, in which there is mutual understanding, recognition, and acceptance by the partners of each other's rights, obligations and responsibilities, as well as their respective strengths, constraints, needs, concerns, and expectations.

education sector development program and Donor-Government workings on it. To go on this assignment, I had taken a leave of absence from my regular job as a senior education specialist at CIDA headquarters and contracted with the Agency as a coopérant.[7] This allowed for an arm's length contractual relationship with CIDA and, therefore, a good degree of independence and objectivity in my fieldwork and the advice that I provided. My primary mandate was to develop a 5-year country basic education strategy for the Agency. This study, an attempt to reflect actively and critically on development cooperation practice as I experienced it, arose out of that consultancy. The study is about how I, as a consultant to a particular aid agency, in tackling my mandate, viewed and grappled with the dynamics at play – with self as agency - in the various interactions that took place among one set of partners, the donors on the one hand and between another set of partners, the donors and the Government of Tanzania on the other in developing the country's education sector development program.

In this capacity in Tanzania, I regularly participated in inter-agency donor meetings as well as Donor-Government deliberations and was able to participate and/or observe firsthand the workings and results of such meetings or consultations. At their respective invitations, I also attended the meetings of international NGOs involved in the education sector and at other times held one-on-one meetings with some of their representatives to discuss policy and practical issues regarding education provision in Tanzania and other jurisdictions in Africa. Since donor agency personnel were rarely seen at the general NGO meetings, I felt I was probably considered sufficiently independent and *untainted* to be invited to these meetings at which their programs and

[7] Coopérant is a CIDA term used to designate an independent development cooperation consultant working on a CIDA-funded project overseas.

Donor-Government plans and behaviour were discussed. Having previously worked as a field staff officer for CUSO, I could instinctively identify with their aloofness from the donor agencies. Generally speaking, NGO perceptions of donor agencies are not too generous; for some, donor agencies are simply too self-centred and overflogging *unrealistic* policies to be effective aid dispensers and partners.

Although I considered myself to be an independent consultant, I was very much a part of the donor community, having been with CIDA, by 1999, for 18 years. I was also there on behalf of CIDA, even though at arm's length. CIDA facilitated my access to diplomatic missions and government ministries by formally announcing my presence in the country, the purpose of my mission and the need for me to meet with those responsible for education policy, planning, programming and administration. Specific letters of introduction were provided on the odd occasion when access to particular officials appeared difficult. However, the nature of Donor-Government relationships and the unequal power configurations it engenders made my relatively easy access possible.

The bicultural focalism that defines the essence of who I am (African/Canadian and therefore *internationalist*) in these settings had its built-in tensions and even contradictions. Once in Tanzania, I was fully immersed and implicated in the development community. I was very much a part of the world that I investigated and was affected by it (Boyle, 1994, p. 165 on self-reflexivity). Needless to say, I brought along with me my own socio-cultural and political baggage, so to speak – my background, ideas, small "i" ideology, biases, preferences, dislikes and perspectives.[8] I could not

[8] For example, having grown up in a colonial environment, in which the powerful exploited the weak for the former's own benefit, I am naturally a passionate defender of the underdog and abhor paternalistic relationships. On another plane, my *politics* embraces a strong sense of social justice and responsibility.

therefore be a detached observer as such; I was part of the life that was exercising the development community.

For this retrospective study of personal experience, my *self* is principally the instrument for both data collection and analysis and the generation of knowledge. One of the reasons for undertaking the study is the keen desire to look back and reflect on my field experience and "shed new light . . . on the nuances of [our] work [as development cooperation practitioners] and of the implication of [our] actions" (Schön, 1983). I adopted a reflective posture but, at the same time, went beyond just reflecting on what I did and how I went about doing what I did, to acknowledging and discussing some of the underlying assumptions held that informed my work and how the dominant constructs in development influence development cooperation practice.

Finally, I should add that this study of personal experience is not only informed by the time that I spent in Tanzania and the research method and underlying philosophical perspective selected to frame it. It is also informed by a total of over 26 years of experience as a development cooperation practitioner.

The Partnership Problematique

Tanzania is a very poor country and was during the period covered by this study almost totally dependent on donor assistance for its development budget. It was so beholden to donors that its senior officials were reluctant to query, contest or reject anything that the donors were offering because the donors "might simply walk away with their money which we so badly need" (personal conversation with a top official of the Ministry of Education and Culture). This glaring asymmetry in the power relationship

between the government and its benefactors strongly underscores the vexing problematique that the rhetoric of partnership presents.

I am particularly interested in *Official Development Assistance* partnerships. These are partnerships between donor agencies and their recipient country partners. I use the term *Official Development Assistance partnership* in order to distinguish it from development partnerships in the donor countries that deal with their own local economic development involving, for example, Government-Business partnerships.

Development practitioners out of donor agencies tend to think that whatever they conceive as development must be good for the recipients who are presumed incapable of sorting out their own needs and priorities (see Crewe & Harrison, 1998, pp. 69-77 for this type of argument). However, such viewpoints are not limited to outsiders. Insiders have also been known to voice similar concerns. Only recently, for example, a program analyst in a major Western donor agency had this to say in responding to a global initiative from the agency's policy wonks:

> Needless to say I am disgusted with the lack of consultation [with the Africans]. . . . There are enough partnerships in the world especially Africa to sink the continent. We do not need to create more parallel systems, take away the authority of existing government and non-governmental agencies and research institutes because "we" have a perceived better way of doing things. This is not partnership. This is politically motivated, developmentally naïve, imposed programming. (Gleaned from an internal memo with the permission of its author).

These battles go on within the four walls of development agencies but rarely will they ever get published. Crewe and Harrison in their book, *Whose Development? An ethnography of aid* (1998), revealed some of the many contradictions that belie so-called Donor-Government partnerships. For example, conflicts between the parties are sometimes recognized but they are downplayed (p. 75); how donors describe their relationship with recipients leaves one with the impression that the parties are on equal terms, have the same objectives, have as much say in defining them (p. 70) but the conditions they impose on the recipients make the idea of cooperation between equals problematic (p. 71); and people's identities and their position in these partnerships create structures of power as donor personnel, from societies where cultural racism persists, are perceived to devalue the beliefs, customs or values of dependent recipients (p. 88).

The incidence of power inequalities and the influence that one party can exert over the other in policy choices exacerbates tensions that render partnerships largely ineffective. A sustained cooperative relationship between donors and recipients has remained elusive since the subject was first examined in some detail in the late 1960s.

In order to address a concern about the flagging state of international support for foreign aid in the late 1960s, the Lester B. Pearson Commission on International Development was launched in 1968, supported by the World Bank, to look into the results of some two decades of development cooperation, assess them, shed light on the mistakes that were made and then advance policies that would promote, enhance and sustain better future development cooperation partnerships (Pearson, 1969). It issued its report in 1969 aptly entitled *Partners in Development.* As one of its key recommendations, it recognized the important role that a sound partnership framework

plays in successful development co-operation. Its central thesis, therefore, is that Donor-Government relationships should be governed by a partnership, which allows for a good measure of predictability. It called for consultations between donors and recipients as a matter of routine practice and for recipients to assume responsibility for fashioning their own development policies. Some three decades later, a "sustained cooperative relationship," as Pearson described it (p. 17), between donors and recipients, remains problematic. Why? The ownership of the local development agenda and process that Pearson alluded to is hardly happening. The idea of ownership, as currently practiced, is very narrowly focused, involving largely central governments. For ownership to truly take root, it must be country-wide involving a variety of stakeholders. As Donors and Governments do the ownership dance, there are bound to be tensions. If not recognized and resolved, these tensions could lead to mutual distrust and mistrust. For this reason, the puzzle that I have attempted to unravel in this study is the role of ownership and trust in shaping effective partnerships.

Overarching Research Question

In terms of the effectiveness and sustainability of working relationship(s) between donors and recipients, the overarching research question that motivates my study is: why is it that Donor-Government partnerships do not seem to work so well? The unsteady nature of Donor-Government partnerships, which take place within the context of a SWAp arrangement, is often a source of frustration and angst for both donors and recipients, much of which is borne out of mutual distrust and a sense of lacking control on the part of the recipients. Partnerships in SWAp arrangements do raise a vast array of questions, each important enough to warrant a separate dissertation. SWAp is a term that

is unique to the foreign aid industry perhaps because of the nature of the unequal relationship between a Donor and its Government partner. SWAp is an investment instrument for donors that come with conditions attached, making cooperation between equals, as Crewe and Harrison (1998, p. 71) point out, quite problematic. It is not a term that is commonly heard of within academia or public-sector circles in the industrialized West. Therefore, the complex relationships that SWAp arrangements spurn do not receive much academic attention by scholarly researchers and journals. For this study however, the interactive modalities that betray trust and ownership in such partnerships were explored.

What Difference Will This Study Make?
The Need for an Anthropology of Development

> The countries within which both governments and NGOs operate plainly contain very different histories of the relationship between the state and voluntary sector, political structures and systems of patronage. The language of partnership has encompassed the whole spectrum, without much differentiation between types of partner, their history, and their context. (Crewe & Harrison, 1998, p. 72).

The anthropology of development is a complex phenomenon that needs to be unravelled in order to fully understand and appreciate its impact on the development process. Development anthropology is about real life manifestations of the actual practice of development as experienced on the ground in the field; of the professional culture of aid agencies whether private or official; and of the paper-shuffling culture that characterizes the bureaucratized and political decision-making processes in official development assistance (Green, 1986, p. 3). Development anthropologists tend to exhibit a bias that

favours the poor, the voiceless, and the powerless "even when they work for powerful donor agencies as employees" (Enge & Harrison, 1986, pp. 211-222). Clearly, there is a need to focus greater attention on the inner workings of donor agencies and the dynamics of their relationships with recipient countries. It will take the exposition and expression of insider voices in donor agencies, reflecting on their practice and committing themselves to being better practitioners of what they do, to unravel the black box in which development cooperation practice is shrouded. Unfortunately, not much in this regard is happening. That is where studies such as this one make for important beginnings, and there is an increasing call for explicit insider perspectives to inform development cooperation theory and practice (see, for example, Wright, 2003).

Reasons for pre-conceived policy choices are not always clear to one party or the other in Donor-Government partnerships. Once projects or programs get underway, this lack of clarity, and of mutual trust and respect, gets in the way of effective working relationships. Consequently, co-operation tends to manifest itself in the powerful doing the *operating* while the weak does the *co-ing*. Leading up to the G8 Summit in Canada in June 2002, a G8 Task Force on Education ran an e-discussion about essentially the G8's *response ability* in assisting recipients to achieve Education For All. In the discussion about recipients' National Education Plans, the discussion moderator noted that all the commentators who responded "underlined the crucial importance of consultations . . . and partnerships" (Week 2 Summary, http://www.g8education.gc.ca/). Incidentally, a commentator (Salmon, March 10, 2002, Week 4) while stating that partnership is key for positive outcomes and accountability, noted that "almost all of the discussion around outcome targets centers on national action plans, not donor action plans." The point

being hinted at here is that a partnership without reciprocity in demands and obligations is likely to be problematic in effecting program implementation. It also underscored the key issue of ownership.

Scholarly literature on *Official Development Assistance partnerships* per se is limited. My contribution to the field will help fill some of the gaps in our knowledge of *Official Development Assistance partnerships*. The lessons that this study holds for sustainable development would be helpful to both donors and recipients alike, and development cooperation practitioners in general, in understanding the practical realities as well as the conceptual foundations and principles that are at play and how genuine, workable partnerships can be engendered.

Moreover, as a development cooperation practitioner-researcher, I am interested in learning by actively engaging in a systematic reflection on the practice of development cooperation. In putting forward a narrative of this reflection, it is my hope that this study will inform and influence the practice and theory of development cooperation. Many important voices, such as those of recipient governments, are often silent in international development research. One that is also not often heard is the voice of employees of donor agencies. It is important to acknowledge the ways in which these voices can help. Giving voice to the insider helps us to understand our own role as development cooperation practitioners; otherwise it is difficult to be of help to others.

Epistemic scaffolding

"The telling of stories can be a profound form of scholarship moving serious study close to the frontiers of art" (Joseph Featherstone quoted in Alvermann, 2000). In international development, the voices of development cooperation practitioners are often

silent because they are all too busy implementing policies and programs to devote much, if any, time to serious reflection on the whys and hows of their work. The emic perspective tends to predominate as we listen to or read the stories of the young school dropout, the homeless, the orphan, the struggling village subsistence farmer, local communities envisioning their future and making decisions that affect their daily lives, and so on. The same goes for researchers whose voices are not often heard in these circumstances. This study is about giving voice to the development cooperation practitioner-researcher. Therefore, I am adopting the narrative method as my general strategy of inquiry within the context of qualitative research.

Autoethnographic, reflexive, and reflective in nature, my work is epistemologically guided by the interpretive anthropology of Clifford Geertz (1973, 1983, 1988) and the postmodern anthropology of James Clifford (1986, 1988). These *tools* allow for (researcher) subjectivity as long as I make my biases explicit and acknowledge the influence they may have had on my judgement throughout the research and writing processes (Sells, Smith & Newfield, 1997). From James Clifford, who states that ethnography is "something that could apply to all sorts of different people interpreting themselves and their communities in 'cultural terms,'" I learn the "language of articulation," which he defines as:

> a simultaneously expressive and political connecting and disconnecting of elements – the sense that any socio-cultural ensemble that presents itself to us as a whole is actually a set of connections and disconnections. A cultural body is thus a kind of ongoing coalition, a process which also includes actively sustained antagonisms with enemies and outsides. (Clifford, 2000).

Postmodern theories are concerned with the historical patterns in the exercise of power through social institutions and the importance of analyzing such power deployment. They look at mainstream individuals and institutions in terms of their *governing* structures and experiences and the ways in which the *oppressed* act to subvert those socially-constructed realities (Messinger, 2001). In the stories I tell, for example, I try and tease out this element of the relationships under review. As James Clifford (2000) himself puts it, "We need historical specificity and an analysis of social inequality and power." (Clifford, 2000; Sanches, 2000).

These postmodern theories also seek to interrogate mainstream worldviews or interpretations of politics and social relations and to analyze how the powerful deploy their power in subjugating the less powerful (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Thus, they tend to underscore research that empowers and allows for the voices of the voiceless to be heard, and within the context and nature of my study, requires that I, the researcher, be self-reflexive as I research, analyze and tell my story (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 509).

How people interpret and make sense of their experiences is more than just a function of describing those experiences. Mere descriptions, although necessary, are not fully sufficient in producing understanding. A synthesis of the essential meanings that are central to the experience, or thick description as Geertz (1973) would have it, must be undertaken in order to establish the common threads that enable the reader to make sense of his or her own experiences in similar circumstances.

On Embracing the Narrative Dance

Narrative is not unlike music! Particular musical notes and sounds trigger in us homo sapiens certain memories, reflexes, rhythms and reactions - of occasion, of sadness,

of sheer joy, melancholy, happiness, romance, love, duty, solemnity, and so on. It is the musician's instrumentality, as agency, that conjures up life, a certain life, to which we respond passively or actively, happily or sadly, disapprovingly or approvingly, positively or negatively, and knowingly and unknowingly. And what conjures up life in narratives? As Rodriguez (2002) notes,

> Compelling narratives are intensely interpretative. . . . It is . . .through interpretation that narratives find life and prosperity. Interpretation makes for new and different meanings, experiences, and understandings. It allows different narratives to belong organically to different moments and spaces. The legitimacy of different narratives is derived through interpretation and negotiation.

So, like music that elicits different responses from its listeners, these interpretations may resonate or not with some and yet be troublesome to others; this is made possible through the different appreciative cultural or ideological filters that readers employ to assess such interpretations.

As a development cooperation practitioner-researcher engaged in a critical reflection on my own experience, it is my earnest hope that the stories told and the narrative accounting rendered in this study stirs in the reader the same sense, feeling and passion that I had about their relevance, importance and practical utility. The three mini-stories which constitute *the* story narrated in Chapter 4 offer a portrayal of how particular insights are gained of a program or process and of how each is experienced and understood (Krueger, 2002). To paraphrase Preskill's (1998, p. 346), to be the best that we can be at what we do, we must give considerable thought to our work, to what it is

that we do, why we do it, and how we can excel at it or do better – a process that Preskill labels as the "narrative of reflective practice."

Storytelling is not a piece of surreal theatre that is expressed linguistically; for, more often than not, narrative involves the jotting down of actions observed and of doings and happenings. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) note, "This is the stuff of narrative inquiry." (p. 79). Embracing this form of inquiry in the field becomes "a form of living, a way of life." For the practitioner, it becomes a RE-search of his/her own experience and the approach allows for the interpretive accounts that are rendered from that experience; "they provide insights . . . that often make powerful connections to the readers' own experience" (Anderson, 1994). Grumet (1992) argues that experience is not everything, that it by itself has no meaning. Rather, it is in retrospect, via reflection, that it is rendered meaningful. Such is the nature of the critical reflections I make following each story told in the findings chapter.

Connecting individual events to form a comprehensive whole such that they are contextually understood undergirds the essence of the narrative method. Narrative is therefore one basic form of knowing (as opposed to the paradigmatic medium through which we search for universal truth), subjective but nonetheless reflective of people's real experiences (Bruner, 1990). The subjectivity inherent in stories (the phenomena) and in narratives (the inquiry) raises the issue of rigour in narrative research. Iron-clad criteria for evaluating the quality of narrative research are yet to be developed and universally adopted. As such, "each inquirer must search for, and defend, the criteria that best apply to his or her work" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 7). I revisit this issue later in Chapter 3. Subjectivity is inherent in stories and in narrative vis-à-vis personal

experience. In spanning the epistemic landscape in search of relevant approaches to inform my study, I find that the concepts of reflexivity, reflective practice and autoethnography are useful approaches to researching personal experience. Elements of the constitutive properties of these methodological instruments and their interrelationships are also explored in Chapter 3. I turn, at this juncture, to a brief outline of the assumptions underlying the study.

Assumptions that Inform this Study

The purpose of this section is to discuss, briefly, some of the key points and issues that have influenced and driven my general approach to this study; they are political, philosophical and cultural in nature and revolve around the questions of modernity, progress and history, power, subjectivity, representation, and culture.

Tanzania: Transiting to modernity. It was clear in Julius Nyerere's Tanzania that education provision was aimed at social transformation in ways that supported his grassroots African socialist vision embodied in the concept of *Ujamaa* (a villagization policy that was grounded in the *ideology* of communalism). Primary education was heavily emphasized as a means of engendering mass literacy and education. Post-primary education, on the other hand, received relatively minor attention, resulting today in the worst level of secondary education provision in the world (IRIN News, 2002, December 18). With the SWAp (education sector) drama that was unfolding in the 1998-1999 period, the overarching strategic goal or purpose in education provision was not as clear. It seemed missing. It was not in sharp focus as was Nyerere's socialism-inspired education provision. Donors were into it from the standpoint of Education For All – basically, a mass *literacing* that will enable people to read and write and generally

function productively in their own societies and importantly enable donors, working with their developing country *partners* meet universal targets (e.g., gender parity, net enrolment ratios) derived from the international convention. University types pointed to the imperatives of *globalization* and lamented the lack of attention to secondary and postsecondary education that characterized the SWAp deliberations. One thing was certain in the minds of all: education will *modernize* Tanzania.

President Nyerere's vision for his country was not terribly ambitious in the grand scheme of things. It was modest, simple, and local. Apart from his spirited critique of the nature of international trade as it affected his country, a *globalized* Tanzania in hot pursuit of modernity was not in his ideological cards. His successors who now practice what I call neo-liberal *ujamaa* see their world differently. They are thinking globally and, even if somewhat reluctant at times, believe that there is a place to embrace the ideology of a free market economy. The race to modernity is on in earnest but I have wondered if the Tanzanians, let alone the Donors, *understand* what all of this means, which leads me to the issue of progress and history.

Progress and history. A characteristic of the modern subject is that s/he is seen as perfectible (see Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Discourse on the origins of inequality* (1992). The subject can know him/herself, know the world, and improve both. From the modern standpoint, non-modern societies are seen as frozen in time - i.e., pre-historical, pre-modern. This is how the religious order in Europe was judged, and subsequently, this has been how the non-Western world was characterized. Development in the form of industrialization is the economic manifestation of progress. Democratization, human rights, etc., are its political manifestation. To be other than capitalist or democratic (in the

sense of Western-style political institutions) is seen to be backward and in need to be perfected. The modern (Western) subject, therefore, perceives him/herself (or his/her community, country, culture, etc.) as more advanced, more civilized and, consequently, in a position to dictate the proper course of action to others (non-Westerners).

In my experience in Tanzania, I got this uneasy feeling that Donors appeared to know so much, yet understood virtually nothing in their *crusade* to develop Tanzania. They seemed to care more than the Tanzanians cared about themselves and their circumstances and this was hard to believe. But it takes two to tango, one might argue. However, the power inequality between Donors and the Government was so staggering it left Tanzania with very little choice but to dance along no matter how ungraceful and uncomfortable the dance.

Power. The contention that *knowledge* is power is important to postmodernists but it comes from Francis Bacon.[9] Knowledge seeks to explain the world so as to act on it. Knowledgeable people know about their conditions and, therefore, can change them in a way that suits them. The social sciences try to determine the natural laws that govern human behaviour. Once these laws are presumably discovered, reason and knowledge consist in recognizing them. Interpretivists like Clifford Geertz (1983) contend that knowledge is a social construct (occasioned by human discourse) and one that is intersubjective – and therefore dynamic – rather than static in the notion of objectivity. The postmodern use of knowledge as power refers to the capacity of the oppressed, the excluded, the silenced and voiceless, etc., to know their world and resist the power of social actors who may hold a hegemonic sway over them.

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[9] Bacon's "knowledge is power" is derived from "De Haeresibus," in Bacon's Meditationes Sacrae (1597). The original reads "nam et ipsa scientia potestas est," which means "for knowledge itself is power."

Donor-Government relationship in Tanzania was always tense. Although the Government was an overwhelming underdog in the relationship, it found subtle but annoying ways of *expressing* its dissatisfaction with Donor behaviour that it did not appreciate. The challenge for Donors was in disentangling such expressions in order to improve the relationship but they either did not get it, as the saying goes, or were too self-assured or self-absorbed to bother.

Subjectivity. As posited by René Decartes (1996), the modern subject (the self) is typically the rational, autonomous individual. The individual and his or her endowment with reason is the foundation of knowledge if s/he chooses to exercise this faculty. What the individual can do with his or her faculties is best expressed by Immanuel Kant's (1784) exhortation "Dare to know!" (in What is Enlightenment?). In scientific research, the self-certainty of the individual leads to the certainty of his or her observation. Empiricism is based on observations that are thought to be accurate because the objects were seen by the observer. Ironically, the knowledge produced by the modern subject with empirical research is thought to be objective, that is, beyond interpretation. This orientation to *truth* is one that is peculiar to Western, modern intellectual history. Postmodernists see rational and empirical knowledge as subjective. In considering development, I would argue that postmodernism rejects the idea that the only trajectory desirable or feasible is the one presented by neo-classical/neo-liberal economists. In other words, the Western experience is just that – a Western experience, not a universal truth.

The idea of a plurality of perspectives and the consequent inherent subjectivity in storytelling informed my own approach to truthmaking as will be discussed later.

Representation. Dominant groups dominate by way of discourse that represents others rather than letting them speak for themselves. Power resides in the capacity to define reality as they observe it and suppress alternative accounts. Marginal accounts and marginal knowledge act as a counter-discourse that expresses the power of those occupying the standpoint of the excluded. The control of means of communication or diffusion of knowledge means that only some forms of representation predominate and dominate. Put most simply, representation is how the *others* are spoken about. We see this quite often in the official storylines of donor agencies. Sometimes, donor representatives, affected by the constraints of their organizational culture, *negotiate* the official storyline. Other voices – developing country people and governments and NGOs for example – tend to be marginalized. The more diverse the voices the better the chances will be for a development cooperation process that makes sense. For this reason, it is even more important to hear more insider voices like mine that may be different from official storylines.

Culture. From a postmodern standpoint, the idea that truth is transcendental or that it can be discovered is dubious. Subjects are embedded in a social, geographical, and historical context. They are born into cultures that shape their subjectivity and their perceptions of the world. Postmodernists tend to see reason and science as the product of a particular culture (the modern West). Because they do not represent a transcendental truth, they cannot claim epistemic superiority. Clifford and Marcus (1986) are concerned with the way ethnography takes for granted the assumptions of modernity, and how ethnography can be reformed to allow the subjectivity of an "other" culture to express itself.

This raises for me the important question of how *bicultural* or even *multilateral* people like me see and interpret social life in particular international settings. In planning development programs and projects, I now occasionally find myself asking: why would they want this? Surely, they just don't want to be like us! But what exactly do they want? This questioning allows me the possibility of entertaining a meaningful dialogue with those whose development I am striving to promote.

Thesis organization

The thesis is organized into five chapters. In this first chapter, I have discussed the focus of the study, stated the problem that motivated the study, outlined the significance of the study, and posed the research puzzle to be explored. This is followed in the next chapter by a literature review of partnership. Perspectives on the concepts of partnership and the key related issues of ownership and trust are explored. A typology of *Official Development Assistance* partnership is identified and analyzed. In Chapter 3, I deal with the epistemology and method that provides the framework for the constructing and telling of the stories from the field that I narrate in the subsequent chapter. The concepts of narrative inquiry, the general strategy adopted for undertaking the study, and reflexivity, reflective practice and autoethnography are discussed. My stories from the field are narrated in Chapter 4. Each story ends with a critical reflection on the meanings of these stories.

In the last chapter, I summarize the study and draw pertinent conclusions from my findings, and look at the implications that the study has for me as a practitioner-researcher, other development cooperation practitioners, donor agencies, and official aid recipients. The implications for further research are also addressed. To address some of

the structural shortcomings of the Donor-Government partnership that is evidenced in Chapter 4, I propose and discuss a modest and tentative framework that would allow multiple stakeholders at various levels of government and civil society to actively participate in development cooperation activities, particularly SWAp-like activities, thereby ensuring greater and more sustainable partnerships.

Chapter 2

Wading Through the Swamp of Partnership Literature: Positioning Donor-Government Relationships in Sector-Wide Arrangements

Introducing the chapter

Klees (1999) argues that we would need unprecedented levels of cooperation and coordination in the 21st century in order to survive and that such a change could be furthered by new partnerships but not ones that are

> based on unexamined assumptions or...some idealized, warm and fuzzy "let's get together" idea. The concept of partnership, as generally used today, misses and actually negates the dissent, struggle, and collective action that are necessary to transform fundamentally unequal, unfair, and often oppressive relations into partnerships of mutuality, reciprocity, and fairness. (pp. 13-15).

Arguably, three strands of perspective dominate in the literature on partnership: the normative, the reactive, and the instrumental perspectives (Brinkerhoff, 2002, pp. 20-21). The first is embraced by individuals who advocate on behalf of NGOs. They seek a larger role for civil society in general and NGOs in particular, critiquing official development assistance and adopting a moral high ground in the process. This perspective highlights and promotes such partnership values as mutuality of influence and equality and seeks long-term commitments in donor-recipient relationships. Examples cited by Brinkerhoff (p. 20) of the normative perspective are the works of Garilao (1987), Van der Heijden (1987), Bush (1992), Smillie (1995), Malena (1995), and Fowler (1999)

The reactive perspective came about as a counter to the normative perspective, typified in statements, reports, strategic planning and other programming documents that donor agencies produce. These documents are usually high on rhetoric, using glowing terms to describe its partnership work as a way of deflecting criticism and promoting better public relations. They tend to overlook or downplay the many constraints of, and opportunities for improving effectiveness in partnerships (Brinkerhoff, 2002, p. 21). As noted later in this chapter, such partnerships have been described as "phony" (Kernaghan, 1993).

Finally, the third strand – the *instrumental* perspective - regards partnership as a means to an end, the end being, for example, the attainment, in operations, of effectiveness, efficiency and responsiveness.

In the field, at the recipient country level, partnerships in international development take a variety of forms. The main partnerships are between and amongst donor agencies, between donors and NGOs, Northern NGOs and NGIs (such as universities) and their Southern counterparts, and not least, donors and their host governments. The focus of this study is on the bilateral government-to-government partnership between Donors as a group and the Government of Tanzania in the particular settings of an education sector development program. Given this focus, I trace in this chapter the origins and evolution of *Official Development Assistance* partnerships as background to an examination of concepts of partnership and some of the problems inherent in them. Finally I briefly review the partnership principles of trust and ownership.

Official Development Assistance Partnerships: Origins and Evolution[10]

Old hands at development cooperation tend to be skeptical about the usefulness of funding conferences except when such conferences might lend weight to a policy position that they favour or would like to push. One conference that is now profoundly exercising the discourse on education provision in the poorer developing countries is the Jomtien Conference on Education For All, which advocates universal access to, and attainment of basic education for all. The mother of all such conferences however was the Breton Woods conference that was convened in 1944 by President Roosevelt of the United States, following the destruction occasioned by the Second World War. The conference gave birth to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (The World Bank). Thus began the origins of (official) development assistance.

Emergence of Development Aid

The concept of development aid began when the United States signed into law the European Recovery Program, known more popularly as the Marshall Plan[11] and Economic Cooperation Agency under the leadership of President Harry Truman. Considered to be something of historic importance, the Marshall Plan, in particular, established a new aid policy, which embodied "preferential credit" to European countries. Under the aegis of the Marshall Plan, the US made $17 billion available to European countries for reconstruction, which placed the United States as a leader in encouraging development. As it progressively expanded its trade policy to embrace Third World countries through bilateral trade, so did the Communist bloc. Both blocs sought to gain

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[10] For this overview of the history of development cooperation, I borrowed heavily from Jacques Gélinas' *Freedom from Debt* (1998) in which he examines at some length the origins of development assistance.
[11] The Plan is so-called because it was named after General George C. Marshall, the then US Secretary of State.

allegiance from developing countries and this was, in many ways, beneficial for the two blocs. Through the reconstruction initiative, "much of the money so provided came back to the United States for the purchase of food, raw materials and capital goods. It was thus a powerful stimulant to the American economy" (Galbraith, 1994, p. 147) and the concept of *tied aid,* unwittingly, was born. This was part of the *Keynesian Developmentalism* that came to dominate the 1940-1960 period; it emphasized macroeconomic policies and economic growth particularly with reference to much of the world that was still under colonial rule but were poised and moving toward political independence (Brohman, 1996).

The United States leadership role, following World War II, did not stop at the introduction of the Marshall Plan. It promoted economic relations between the US and Europe, encouraging the latter to form a unified front (for economic stability and growth and of course against the Communist Bloc) through the establishment of the Organization for European Economic Cooperation. This organization later became what is now the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); it took on its development orientation in 1961 embracing, in terms of foreign aid, a greater number of their colonies and ex-colonies. The Marshall Plan *died* in 1952. However the efforts at integration and development that it spun were continued by the Organization for European Economic Cooperation and its successor, the OECD.

The Yalta Conference of allied nations held in 1945 resulted in what was to become the East and West ideological blocs with sharply differing political and economic systems. Out of it emerged the capitalist bloc led by the United States on the one hand, and the Russia-led Soviet socialist bloc on the other. With former colonies in mind, the

emerging blocs set the stage to win the allegiance of these colonies through development aid and military cooperation. Disagreements between the colonial powers triggered the onset of the Cold War in 1947, instigated by the United States with its proclamation of the Truman Doctrine, which committed the United States to supporting any regime that was threatened by the Communist bloc. The Communist bloc proved to be *competitive.* In the circumstances, in/for the Third World, development aid seemed incidental and what one might call a *contingent collateral* as the competition for alliances and influence between the two superpowers was waged through military aid and direct intervention in countries such as China, Vietnam, and Cambodia in Asia; Angola, Mozambique and The Congo (formerly Zaire) in Africa; and Guatemala, Chile and Nicaragua in South America.

Technical Assistance Cooperation

Concerned about the general *backwardness* of Third World countries and the potential threat that this posed for both the underdeveloped and developed world, President Truman in his second inaugural address called for a general mobilization and the launching of a "bold new" development aid program (Galbraith, 1994, p. 147). The UN had adopted on December 4, 1948 a UN Resolution 200 targetting the technological backwardness of the underdeveloped countries. It called for the deployment of international experts to advise the developing country governments about their economic development programs. In 1950, the Colombo Plan was hatched to provide technical assistance to needy Third World countries. As Galbraith (1994) recalled, Truman called on the developed world to:

> pool their technological resources in this undertaking. Their contributions will be warmly welcomed. This should be a cooperative enterprise in which all nations work together through the United Nations and its specialized agencies whenever practicable. The old imperialism – exploitation for foreign profit – has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic fair dealing. (p. 147)

Under the influence of Truman, in 1950, the US Congress adopted a resolution that urged the government to sign bilateral aid agreements with underdeveloped countries amounting to $6 billion – over a third of this in military aid – apparently in response to the Communist victory in China and emerging revolutionary parties in underdeveloped countries fuelled by both the United States and Communist Blocs, each of which took sides in the revolutions taking place in the Third World countries. The island state of Taiwan, for example,

> has assumed the role of Washington's loyal junior partner in East-West confrontations as a means to obtain support and protection for its own survival. . . . [It] received massive American military and economic aid during the critical 50s and 60s. American aid [was] responsible for half of the island's gross investment in 1955 and 20% in 1964. (Clarke & Lemco, 1988, p. 43).

The developing countries as a group formed a Non-Aligned pact as a means of seeking shelter from the hegemonic battles of the superpowers. They called themselves the Group of 77 and pressed for better international trading arrangements. However, many did not hesitate to take the aid that either superpower offered, playing one against the other for their own benefit.

The Development Assistance Committee of the OECD plays a leading role in articulating and disseminating information on aid policy as well as monitoring and harmonizing aid policies within an ideologically biased orientation to development which embraces only too readily neo-liberal *structural adjustment* mechanisms. It is against the principles established at Breton Woods that the two other major instruments of Western power, influence and hegemony - the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank - offer their loans to recipient governments facing deteriorating and abject economic conditions in their countries. These loans come with harsh conditions, causing considerable angst and suffering by the people of these countries. To receive a loan, a recipient government must toe the lines dictated by these two international bodies under the established Structural Adjustment Programs, which became operational in 1979. Lately, the sector-wide approach to programming (SWAp) is one setting in which Donor-Government partnerships are being exercised.

The Sector-Wide Approach to Programming

With the unpopularity of structural adjustment programs (SAP) in the 1970s and 1980s, the World Bank introduced the *sector investment program* (SIP). It was originally coined by the World Bank to describe the generic attributes of a sector-wide approach to development financing with an accent on investment. A SIP is, therefore, an operational instrument for implementing a broad sector approach to investment lending. It is sector-wide in scope; governed by a clear sector strategy and policy framework; local stakeholders assume full control of the agenda; all main donors sign on to the approach and participate in the financing involved; instituting implementation arrangements that are, to the extent possible, common to all financiers; and local

capacity rather than long term technical assistance is relied upon as much as possible for projects (Okidegbe, 1997, p. ix).

SWAps grew out of Sector Investment Programs and the Structural Adjustment Programs that preceded SIPs. The latter encouraged pro-free market and macro-economic policies in which governments divested themselves of public-owned enterprises and promoted an *enabling environment* for private enterprise. The fiscal belt-tightening that Structural Adjustment Programs entailed brought considerable hardship to both the urban and rural poor. Donor financing in SWAp arrangements is generally in the form of grants dealing mainly with the social sectors of education and health and are deemed to be more flexible and accessible than the SAP or SIP.

SWAp is defined as a framework of co-operation between donor agencies and recipient governments to facilitate the disbursement of aid in pursuance of specific development objectives, e.g., the promotion of quality basic education. A SWAp, to be genuinely considered as such, must be governed by sector policies, its strategies are wide in scope; a coherent policy framework is in place; local stakeholders take the lead; all donors sign on; there are common implementation arrangements; and minimal long-term technical assistance is involved (Harrold, 1995; Foster, Norton, Brown, & Naschold, 2000).

A SWAp ensures that all parties have rights and responsibilities (Cassels & Janovsky, 1998, p. 1777). For example, instead of donor agencies deciding on specific projects, they would only contribute funding. In return for giving up the right to choose projects according to their own priorities, donors would gain a voice, but not a controlling interest, in the process of policy development. This situation is due to the

recognition that donor-driven projects have often absorbed scarce human and financial resources in activities with limited coverage, that projects often adopted standards which could not be replicated or sustained, and that heavy reliance on expatriate technical assistance has been unhelpful to the development of local capacity or management systems (Foster, 1999, p. 3). Moreover, innovations undertaken in the discrete project mode have not always been successfully *scaled up*. As Wright (2003) notes,

> a critical paradox [is] that education systems in Africa reflect a wide range of exciting innovations, yet continue to be plagued by seemingly intractable problems that thwart development efforts in the sector. The main response to this paradox has been to advocate for the scaling up and mainstreaming of those innovations that have proven to be successful. However, it is clear that despite efforts in this direction, we have not been very good at transforming a successful pilot innovation into a system-wide phenomenon that impacts on quality basic education for all. (p. 1).

Part of the solution lies, perhaps, in how donors and recipients *do* partnership in sector-wide programs. The SWAp cooperation framework allows donors and recipients to debate, negotiate and implement development aid. To do so effectively requires trust and a keen sense of ownership by the recipient country. SWAps address the limitations of project assistance by moving away from the project mode of aid delivery towards a program or sector-wide approach, which facilitates the harmonization of policies, procedures, and resource flows between donors and recipients.

Perceiving partnership

Normative perspectives on North-South partnerships provide a window through which the problems of donor-recipient government relationships can be viewed, as in these two comments: (a) "There is no concept that can conjure up a more disturbing propensity for pretence than 'partnerships' in development cooperation at the close of this century (Hoppers, 1999, p. 19); and (b) "It is an anomaly to refer to the relationship between the lenders and the beggars in the global economy as a 'partnership'" (Mugambi, 1999, p. 15).

What partnership is depends on who is talking, what s/he represents and the context in which s/he is operating. When donors use the word *partnership*, they are not necessarily suggesting that they are in a partnership. They may very well believe it but such a state of mind should not be mistaken for what happens in reality. Recipient countries do not use the term nearly as often as the donors do, perhaps because it is possible for a recipient country not to be aware that it is in a partnership with a donor when the issue is raised. With a heavily donor-driven agenda, as was the case in Tanzania, it is hardly surprising that a recipient country with little or no discretionary power in policy agenda-setting and beholden to a donor community that is armed with one conditionality or the other, would not consider its relationship with its donors as a partnership.

On the donors' side, the implicit message in their use of the term partnership, generally speaking, is somewhat psycho-sociological. The fashion in which the term is applied, loose as it may be, belies an empathetic embrace of the other, the recipient, as an *equal*. Donors tend to view themselves as *allies* of the recipient countries with which

they work; they could be relied upon, at least temporarily, to offer needed assistance. In diplomacy, as indeed in many relationships, this exudes a cooperative spirit and a very commendable sentiment that reflect well on donors. Partnership here has an "intrinsic positive value" (Torjman, 1998, p. 2). This is the general sense in which donors use the term, and as Hutchinson (1994, p. 336) argues, partnership is a politically neutral term that connotes cooperation and sharing and can therefore appeal to all concerned.

The term partnership has been bandied about so loosely and indiscriminately that it has lost much of its true meaning. When even a major Canadian bank, perhaps a bit too eager to demonstrate that it is *au courant*, regards its customers as partners, one must wonder how much the customers share in the bank's profits and losses (Torjman, 98, p. 2). Defining the phenomenon of partnership is, therefore, very important; it is a way of providing us with "guidelines for recognizing the phenomenon when it occurs and for distinguishing it from other observable phenomena" (Wood & Gray, 1991, p. 149).

Theorizing Partnership

Defining Partnerships

The concept of partnership has long been associated with business organizations. Our general and popular understanding of the concept is perhaps best illustrated by a dictionary definition. A partnership in business is "a contract entered into by two or more persons in which each agrees to furnish a part of the capital and labor for a business enterprise, and by which each shares in some fixed proportion in profits and losses" (Morris, 1970, p. 957). So, it defines a partner as "A person associated with another or others in some activity of common interest; especially a member of a business partnership" (p. 956).

Environment Canada, which has been engaged in a large variety of partnerships (about 2,000 of them), had this advice from its Legal Services on what constitutes a real partnership:

> Technically speaking, a partnership is a legal relationship whereby partners share profits and losses and the acts of each partner bind the others. The risk of unintentional liability is significant in the use of the term partnership and as such, it should be used only where it is understood that a liability is to be assumed. Terms such as alliance, cooperative agreement and collaborative activity should be used wherever appropriate to denote a joint activity or looser cooperative arrangement than partnership. (Kernaghan, 1993, p. 72).

Thus, Health Canada defines partnership as:

> a voluntary arrangement between two or more parties that agree to work cooperatively towards shared and/or compatible objectives and in which there is shared authority for, and responsibility and management of, the work;
> joint investment of resources (e.g., time, work, funding, material, expertise, information); shared liability or risk-taking and accountability for the partnered project; collaboration on common causes; and mutual benefits that are often referred to as 'win-win' situations. (Torjman, 1998, p. 2).

These foregoing elements are present in Environment Canada's adopted definition, which reads as follows:

> [Partnership is] a relationship that consists of shared and/or compatible objectives and an acknowledged distribution of specific roles and responsibilities among the participants which can be formal or informal, contractual or voluntary, between

> two or more parties. The implication is that there is a cooperative investment of resources (time, funding, material) and therefore joint risk-taking, sharing of authority, and benefits for all partners." (Kernaghan, 1993, p. 61).

Based on what appears to be standard Government of Canada position on partnerships, Kernaghan offers a broad working definition of the concept, as "a relationship involving *the sharing of power, work, support and/or information* with others for the achievement of joint goals and/or mutual benefits." (p. 61)

The advice from Environment Canada's Legal Services and the position adopted by Health Canada, both support the argument that "partnerships can range from agreements between actors to work towards a common end, to agreements which form a legal contract through which specific targets for performance are defined by the contracting parties" (Bennett & Krebs quoted in Hutchinson, 1994, p. 336). The specific targets in a legal contract include outputs and outcomes that are measurable, reporting formats and deadlines, timeframes for project activities, etc. (Maxwell & Conway, 2000, p. 8).

Conceiving Partnerships

The words *collaboration*, *cooperation* and *coordination* are used a lot within the development cooperation community when discussing partnerships or particular programs. So does the private sector when strategic alliances, for example, are being developed to deal with the complexities of uncertainty. The literature on each is considerable and any one of them on its own would command a full thesis. As they tend to be used interchangeably when they may not mean the same thing, the intention here is not to discuss them exhaustively but to acknowledge that there can be hardly a discussion

about partnership without some mention of these terms. It is in this vein that the concepts are presented briefly in this section.

Looking at inter-organizational structures that resemble or are the same as collaboration, an abundance of related terms exist to describe such structures and this may account for the confusion in interpreting the term *collaboration* (Huxham, 1996, p. 7). The multiple interpretations that exist are a function of how complex collaborative undertakings can be and of the variety of issues that influence such enterprises. This complexity and the theoretical perspectives advanced to explain it are such that no one perspective can serve as the basis for a general theory of collaboration. Barbara Gray who has done considerable work on collaboration and partnership theory (1985, 1989, 1996, 1999; Wood & Gray, 1991) posits that collaboration may arise when "parties with a stake in the problem actively seek a mutually determined solution" (Gray, 1989, p. xviii) and when a shared vision is advanced by those motivated to collaborate (1996). As advocated for SWAps, these collaborative relationships may call for detailed planning, communication and the pooling of resources.

In her 1996 work, Gray elaborated on a collaborative design typology, distinguishing four different types: appreciative planning, collective strategies, dialogues, and negotiated settlements. In appreciative planning, the emphasis is on exploration and analysis of needs, which are not unlike donors' sector review missions to the field that involve exploratory visits and consultations. The results generated from the *appreciative planning* stage inform increased problem definition which may lead to specific proposals being advanced for *collective strategies* to deal with the problems identified. Collective strategies thus emanate from a *collective* or shared vision to take on the tackling of the

need. To operationalize and realize the shared vision, agreements are accordingly struck, outlining the roles, responsibilities and obligations of the collective or collaborators. Conflict resolution is the motivation behind the third and fourth types of collaboration design – dialogues and negotiated settlements. In the foregoing typology, Gray (1989) characterizes partnership as an example of collective strategies and therefore a type of collaboration.

While the Gray typology is essentially based on inter-organizational relations pertaining to the private sector, and does capture to a certain degree the workings of a Donor-Government partnership, it does not fully address the dynamics of the social context of a Donor-Government arrangement, which is unique to development cooperation. Therefore, I will later in this chapter outline a typology adapted from Kernaghan's (1993) analysis based on the concept of power. The social context is an important determinant of the success or failure of Donor-Government partnerships and part of my contribution is to explore this influence of the social context with a particular focus on the Tanzanian education sector development process in ways that challenge the prevailing notions of partnership.

I should add that more recently, Gray (1999) has indicated that research on collaboration has revealed the following developments: two new approaches, based on social capital and network analysis, were evident; resource dependence and transaction cost theories were used mostly for two-party alliances; a tension between the transaction cost and behavioural and structural approaches is evident in work on partners' trust and learning; a critical perspective emerged that emphasizes power differences among the

parties; and there is an increased linkage with institution theory, in particular the work of Anthony Giddens.

I started this section by suggesting that collaboration, cooperation, and coordination tend to be used interchangeably in development cooperation practice. Donors usually share and exchange information among themselves for mutual benefit. This transaction underscores a type of informal inter-organizational relationship, which commands, at least initially, some level of trust and commitment (Himmelman, 1996). Himmelman sees this as *networking* that is not to be confused with collaboration, cooperation or coordination. Some theorists draw clear distinctions between these terms. In situations in which the parties maintain authority and keep their resources separate, clearly defined mission statements, structures or plans do not exist and the resulting inter-organizational relationship is characterized as *cooperation* that is short-term and informal On the other hand, *coordination* is seen as more of a formal process, involving relationships in which organizational missions are a shared objective. The parties involved may contribute resources in support of the mission while retaining authority (Winer & Ray, 1997). Gray (1989) and Himmelman (1996) contend however that networking, cooperation and coordination do take place often as part of the process of collaboration.

Power and Partnership

The purpose of this section is not to review at length the literature on power as it relates to social life and partnership, however partnership is defined. This ground has been well travelled (see, for example, Emerson, 1962; March, 1966; Hickson, Hinings, Lee, Schneck & Pennings, 1971; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1974; Cook, Emerson, Gilmore &

Yamaguchi, 1983; Brass, 1984; Krackhardt, 1990; and Blau, 1955). Instead, I simply want to draw attention to the fact that Actor X can get Actor Y to do what the latter would not otherwise do. This kind of power predominates in Donor-Government relationships as indeed happened in Tanzania (discussed in Chapter 4).

As noted earlier, from the perspective of the Government of Canada, the partnerships it prefers are of the technically non-legal and loose variety. They may represent "a working relationship that is characterized by a shared sense of purpose, mutual respect and the willingness to negotiate" (Lister, 2000, p. 228) or, as noted in a British context, "The mobilization of a coalition of interests drawn from more than one sector in order to prepare and oversee an agreed strategy for regeneration of a defined area" (Bailey, 1994, p. 293). In this sense, donor agency-recipient country relationships are by their nature temporary and pragmatic (Matlin, 1999, p. 6). Mutual interest may be at play but so can self-interest as a strong motivating force. Partnerships of the *Official Development Assistance* variety are in practice not legal phenomena. They are alliances involving, directly or indirectly, collaborative activities and cooperative arrangements aimed at working toward the achievement of shared objectives, with the parties agreeing to their respective roles and responsibilities.

The sloppy invocation in everyday usage by development practitioners of the word *partner(ship)* has given it the status of a term that has, to all intents and purposes, become synonymous with "relationship," "actors," "other donors" (as in common references to "international partners"), "project" and/or "program." One does not get a sense of any real power by recipient countries in these relationships that come with conditions that they must meet before their partners would provide the funding they need.

In all my years in development cooperation, I have not seen or heard of a recipient government imposing any serious conditions on donors regarding the aid it receives. The reason for this can partially be found in the assertion that recipients are free to make their choices as long as those choices turn out to be what the donors want or what the donors had urged, quietly or otherwise. Echoing this assertion is Michael Wolfers' (1974) revisit of the Blackman's Burden, in which he stated that:

> A fundamental weakness of aid programmes is that aid is what the rich countries want to give rather than what the poor countries in their own best interests would choose. . . . The grand notions of the givers may well accord with the grandiose notions of the recipients to nobody's positive advantage (p. 42).
>
> The recipient [institutions] are in the position of beggars grateful for what charity they receive. They are not in the strongest place to challenge the ideas of the donor government or agency (p. 47).

Keohane and Nye (1998, p. 86) classify power into two main categories: behavioural power and resource power. They further sub-divide behavioural power into two types of power – hard power and soft power. Behavioural power is defined as the ability of X to obtain outcomes that X wants. Hard power is X being able to get ABC (or others) to do what ABC would not do, achieving this through threats or rewards. Soft power, on the other hand, is X being able to achieve its goals through what Keohane and Nye describe as attraction rather than coercion; X is able to do this by convincing ABC "to follow or getting them to agree to norms and institutions that produce the desired behavior" (p. 86). A positive outcome would depend on the appeal and persuasiveness of X's ideas.

Resource Power is possessing the resources needed to facilitate the exercise of either hard or soft power. The base, means, scope and amount of power that are supportive of the exercise of power by partners are important facilitating or constraining factors. Sarah Lister (2000, p. 230) describes the *base* of power as the resources that X can use to influence ABC's behaviour; *means* of power as the specific actions by which X can make actual use of these resources; *scope* of power as the set of specific actions that X, by using its means of power can get ABC to perform; and the *amount* of power is the net increase in the probability of ABC actually performing some specific action due to X using its means of power. I discuss below a partnership typology adapted from the work of Kenneth Kernaghan (1993) which is based on the concept of power.

Partnership typology

There are many different ways in which partnerships can be classified. Some sectors tend to have their own unique kinds of partnership as in research partnerships and funding partnerships that are common in academic institutions in their partnership arrangements with government and/or the private sector. How a particular partnership is classified depends on the basis upon which the classification is done and the context within which the particular type of partnership is likely to operate.

Power asymmetry in Donor-Government relations is sometimes at the root of their dysfunctional nature, such that any talk of recipients' ownership of their own development process becomes meaningless as they are not often in control of the agenda at hand. Feelings run high when the issue of the power asymmetry between donors and recipient countries and their implications are discussed. Elliot (quoted in Lister 2000) contends that:

> this is a dialogue of the unequal, and however many claims are made for transparency or mutuality, the reality is – and is seen to be – that the donor can do to the recipient what the recipient cannot do to the donor. There is an asymmetry of power that no amount of well-intentioned dialogue can remove. (p. 229).

Are genuine partnerships possible in the face of such power disparities? The concept of power has been used as a basis for classifying partnerships. I will adopt and adapt it for my purposes and elaborate upon it below within the context of development cooperation. The concept is a useful way of categorizing partnerships because it "is central not only to scholarly analysis of inter-organizational relations, but also to the process of empowerment (Kernaghan, 1993, pp. 61-62). Table I, on the next page, summarizes the five categories into which Kernaghan classifies partnerships: collaborative, operational, contributory, consultative and "phony." The classification is made according to the nature and degree to which partners exercise power, i.e., control or influence.

Table I
Summary of Typology of Partnerships Based on the Concept of Power

Type	Characteristics
Collaborative	• Power-sharing in decision-making • Pooling of resources (money, material, information, labour) • Decision by consensus-building • Mutual dependency • Results by negotiation and compromise • No one partner dominates • Extensive coordination
Operational	• Emphasis on working together in sharing of work rather than decision-making • In terms of control, power is retained by one partner, usually the one providing the bulk of resources • Partners influence one another in a variety of ways • Involves a substantial measure of coordination
Contributory	• An agency agrees to provide funding with little or no involvement in the activity being funded • Funding agency retains ultimate control • Partnership success depends on the performance of the partners receiving the funding support
Consultative	• Public agency solicits advice from those outside of government in pursuit of enhancing service quality • Control is retained by government • Other parties exert considerable influence
"Phony"	• Established for the purpose of co-opting or otherwise manipulating various stakeholders. • Likely results in disempowerment

Source: Kernaghan, 1993, pp. 57-76.

In discussing these categories and their applicability to *Official Development Assistance* partnerships, I briefly review, first, Kernaghan's explanation of the categories.

Collaborative Partnerships. The partnership scene in the Canadian public-private sector context has evolved from support to interest groups for advocacy and policy critique roles to a focus on service delivery and implementation. Collaborative

partnerships in particular present politicians and public servants with some risk because the government relinquishes some autonomy to its partners. A public partner can operate in one of two ways: a) it chooses not to exercise control relying instead on influencing the process, or (b) it delegates some control to one or more of its partners. In the first approach, the British Columbia Financial Institutions Commission, partnering with the private sector, did not obtain results by using its regulatory power. Instead, it actively negotiated and reached appropriate compromises. The sense here is that no one party is allowed to dominate the other. For the second approach, Employment and Immigration Canada partnered with six of Canada's largest aboriginal organizations to create co-managed boards involving the Department and the organizations at local, regional, and national levels aimed at training aboriginal labour force. The public partners are seen as "senior" partners in these relationships because they constitute the funding source but the absence of a "control mentality" makes for successful partnerships.

Official Development Assistance partnerships can be active or passive. The collaborative type is active in that both donors and recipients actively engage in the process of project or program implementation but no Donor-Government partnership can be said to be truly collaborative in the Kernaghanian sense. Prior to program implementation, policy decisions are already in place or have to be made and plans developed within the context of those policy decisions. Agreement is usually in the form of a memorandum of understanding, which spells out the details of the project and the roles and responsibilities of the participating partners. Many donors come to the policy dialogue process with their minds already made up on what sector to support, for how long and at what level of funding support. Some have been known to change policy

directions without any consultation with their host government partner. In the case of Tanzania, there was nothing to discuss but basic education even though the donors insisted on talking sector-wide. DANIDA, which had been a leading donor in the basic education sub-sector, found itself in the awkward position of having to announce that, for policy reasons (formulated and arrived at back in Copenhagen), it was no longer interested in education. It was going to get out of education in Tanzania completely. Agriculture was now the sector of interest for DANIDA. Heavily dependent on donor support, the Government of Tanzania was not in a position to direct or lead the process of consultations between itself and its guest donor community. The best it could do was scramble around in desperate ways to meet ever increasing donor requirements for one thing or the other. Negotiations were virtually on the donors' terms. The dependency at play was not at all mutual. Power-sharing in decision-making was not apparent. Many Donor-Government partnerships would fail the test of true collaborative partnerships. The scope of donor power in many instances is immense, permitting them to exercise an inordinate amount of hard power.

Among donor agencies themselves, the argument could be made that they exhibit strong signs of collaborative partnering when program-level support is being considered. SWAp is all about the accessing and pooling of resources. If it is to work, from the donors' standpoint, they must be able to count on their fellow donors to count. Mutual dependency, therefore, drives the donors to seek results by negotiation and compromise, and arriving at decisions by consensus as much as possible. Technically, no one donor dominates the process. In reality however, one or a few donors may dominate the process by virtue of the fact that they have the largest dollar commitment to pledge. In

the Tanzanian case, DfID and the EU were the leading potential donors to the basic education sub-sector; DfID was clearly in the driver's seat with some 50 million pounds sterling at the ready to pledge at one point, not to mention its active support in other areas such as in health and institutional reform and capacity building. Its considerable soft power enabled it to wield substantial influence among the other donors. Extensive consultations do take place but these are primarily among the donors and then between the donors as a group and the government. A few donors may opt to deal with the government on a bilateral level even though they may participate in multilateral fora such as in donor consultative meetings on a particular sector. There is little or no consultation outside of the central government framework. Collaborative partnerships work more with donors vis-à-vis inter-agency collaboration but less so between the donors and the recipient government.

Operational Partnerships. The Ministry of Natural Resources formally agreed with private sector partners to share both work and expenses in conducting scientific surveys of fish populations. Power in such partnerships may rest with the public organization, especially if it is providing most of the funding. Mutual influence is informally exercised although this type of partnership is unlikely to be empowering for the participants. Many Federal-Provincial partnerships are characterized by this partnership type. For example, Environment Canada partnered with two Quebec departments to clean up the St. Lawrence River. The partnership, which involved considerable coordination work, was designed to "harmonize" action rather than undertake joint management in pursuit of their respective jurisdictions. The joint action adopted maximized the chances of success of the plan implementation.

In operational partnerships in *Official Development Assistance*, a project steering committee consisting of representatives of the donor(s) and the government would usually oversee the overall operations of a project or program. This is the level at which some joint decision-making is effected. Otherwise, day-to-day operations in project implementation are handled by the donor's executing agent. The agent is the contracting company or consultancy implementing the project on behalf of the donor agency. Although the executing agent works closely with designated institutions of the recipient government, it is accountable to the donor, not the recipient government. The project or program steering committee however provides the recipient government with the opportunity to exert whatever influence or control it could muster over the direction and progress of the project. The donor usually provides the bulk of the financing required for the project and is in full control of its disbursement. This resource control provides the donor with considerable hard power should it choose to exercise it. Agreement on the operational modalities of the project is negotiated through a memorandum of understanding.

Contributory Partnerships. This type of partnership works the way donor-recipient relationships work where the recipient organization is the owner of the project and is seeking a contribution from the donor. The donor agency may be dealing with a constituent partner organization at home, a multilateral agency, such as UNICEF or the World Bank, or a development organization in a developing country. In the case of domestic non-governmental organizations and institutions, funding support is through contribution agreements, which, apart from detailing the project, specifies the items for which the donor funds will be used. Unless agreed to by the donor, the recipient cannot

apply these funds in a discretionary manner, i.e., incurring expenses outside of the pre-authorized expenditure profile. The failure or success of a project is entirely up to the recipient organization but ultimate control resides with the donor. Through the periodic reports that the donor receives on project accounting and progress, it can call for remedial action if deemed necessary. It can withhold the further disbursement of funds if compliance is not forthcoming. Otherwise, the donor is a passive partner.

Donors tend to be responsive to the initiatives of other organizations or institutions in contributory partnerships. With the multilateral agencies, their track record is well established and close monitoring of their operations in a specific project is usually not an issue for the bilateral donor making a contribution in support of a multilateral agency's activity. Because the bilateral donor has full confidence in the integrity of the multilateral agency, funds are provided through an "administrative arrangement" and the funds are disbursed in the form of a grant. In the case of a grant, the receiving agency has full discretion as to how the monies received are spent. The bilateral donor's main objective is in furthering the aims of the multilateral agency.

Donors such as CIDA (e.g., its Partnership Branch and Pan-Africa Program) do enter into contributory partnerships with Canadian-based organizations and institutions as well as those based in the developing world. Core funding or specific project funding does allow the recipient organization to pursue its programming objectives but must account for the funds and results to the funding agency periodically. Grants to recipient governments, which would imply minimal or no control of how a grant is spent, is rare.

Consultative Partnerships. Consultative partnerships, by definition, are partnerships between governments and those organizations that are outside of

government involved in service delivery. A good Canadian example is the *Prosperity Initiative* of the Mulroney government in 1991 in which consultations were held widely across Canada with a variety of stakeholders on Canada's state of readiness for international economic competitiveness and the reforms necessary to engender Canada's performance. Such partnerships between donor agencies and recipient governments do not exist. However, at the policy dialogue stage of Donor-Government interaction, each party is trying to estimate the interest and level of commitment to an idea or ideas on potential cooperation in one area or the other. This would indicate that the type of partnership in which donors and recipients are engaged at any given time would depend on the stage they are at in program development and implementation. For example, at the level of sowing the seeds for a possible future cooperation surrounding a particular project concept, a consultative partnership would characterize the relations between the parties and as they move up the operational ladder, they graduate into collaborative or operational partnerships. In that sense, the Kernaghan typology can be described as hierarchical in nature. The most dramatic example of a consultative partnership is the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which was discussed in the summer of 2002 in Kananaski, Alberta, Canada at the G-8 Summit. Bailey (1994) would describe such consultations as *promotional partnerships* (at the *talkfest* level) and *coalition partnerships* (when they actually begin to *commit* and work together to achieve specific goals). A *synergistic partnership* (Mackintosh, 1992) can also be discerned in some aspects of NEPAD, e.g., the Canadian proposal to invest $7 million over three years in the Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Program of the International Trade Centre, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and

Development - aimed at enhancing the potential of Africa's trade capacity (PMO, 2002, News Release).

Phony Partnerships. The "phony" variety of partnerships can happen when government or a donor agency wishes to *constructively engage* an adversary that is highly vocal and critical of its policies, programs and/or operations. An adversary might see that as a public relations stunt designed to silence or greatly minimize the impact of opposition. A good example is the Shell Oil Company in Nigeria with an excess of US$40 million devoted to community development. Many of the communities affected are highly critical of Shell's devastating environmental abuse and neglect. There is little evidence, however, that these communities have been co-opted. If anything, they are demanding more. With donors – bilateral and multilateral – increasingly patronizing NGOs, the latter are coming under pressure to temper their criticisms with considerable restraint as they are, after all, complicit in working with the donors whose policies or programs they may be criticizing.

Donor agencies themselves perceive partnerships in a variety of ways. Some of the conditions they consider necessary for partnering can be facilitative; others would constrain effective partnerships, e.g., the EU's (2001) view that development should be considered a human right and therefore should serve as the primary objective of any partnership it undertakes with members of the Lomé Convention countries. On the surface of it, this condition appears quite laudable but could be dangerous in practice. It is akin to full employment being demanded as a human right in a market economy. No one can offer such guarantees, as commendable as the sentiment may be. Other conditions or principles have an ideological overtone to them, e.g., the requirement for an

environment that is conducive to enterprise and savings (read unfettered free market economies).

Ownership

The literature on ownership generally comes firmly down in favour of involving recipients in problem diagnosis and solution design if the likelihood of follow-through in implementation is to be assured; "This principle reinforces the importance of resisting the tendency to determine solutions in advance and of allowing those with a role in the policy implementation process to develop a situation-specific approach to what needs to be done" (Brinkerhoff, 1996, pp. 4 & 15). *Ownership* in Donor-Government partnership is the ability of Government to assume leadership and control of the local development agenda and process through strong commitment. A few of the contending issues associated with local ownership are discussed briefly below.

The notion of a recipient government's *commitment* would seem to presuppose a unilateral commitment. This is problematic. The goals and objectives of a local program are a shared *property* at the level of implementation. Donors, as are the recipient countries, invest in the program. They have a stake in it as they expect to see positive results and earn *dividends* in the form of program or project sustainability. As partners, mutual commitment and co-leadership is likely to lead to a trusting relationship and an eventual takeover or ownership of the program by the host partner-government.

However, ownership theory deals with rights and responsibilities in a legal and cultural sense that is more germane to the business world (Mackin, 1996). Management-employee relations best typify this theory of rights and responsibilities and may result in *perceived* or *actual* ownership. Mackin locates this dichotomy in two domains: the

organizational life of a business which involves people issues on the one hand and the economic life of the business which deals with business and money issues. Unlike other social organizations like the church, businesses are subject to and driven by competition but as legal entitles do assume the characteristics of a person in the sense of social psychology and power and the complexities of personality that go with them.

Mackin uses the management-employee *divide* to illustrate the actual versus perceived ownership dichotomy that speak to issues of risks and rewards and the fact that every right comes with a responsibility. For example, employees value voice and influence but need to balance that with expertise. Not only can they *get*, they must also *give*. In other words, as workplaces exist in economic time, if employees expect a bonus or a share in profits, they must be ready to earn it by innovating and investing. This balancing of rights with responsibilities and rewards with risks Mackin calls "positive ownership," explained as follows:

> To illustrate, the rights-only and rewards-only folks are people who tend to look at ownership from an individualistic or egoistic perspective. They tend to ask, "What's in it for me?" On the other hand, the responsibilities-only or risks-only people tend to see ownership in a paternalistic way. Those with a balanced perspective on ownership however, look at ownership as a "membership" or "partnership" concept.

He notes however that there are "ownership skeptics" who are outside these categories and do not declare themselves on one side or the other but wait to see "genuine evidence of how leadership and management will treat this issue before they decide to get into the boat and begin to row."

Mackin's analysis holds some truth for Donor-Government partnerships if we substitute Management for Donor and Employee for (recipient) Government. His research indicates that

> Management is generally negative about the rights of ownership but positive about responsibilities; they are positive about risks but negative about rewards. Their message to their workers can be characterized as the following: "Act like an owner, sit down and be quiet." Workers, on the other hand, are often positive about the rights of ownership but negative about responsibilities; they are negative about risks but positive about rewards. Their message to management is: "Reward me like an owner but treat me like an employee."

Ownership as a *rights* issue in the Donor-Government partnership context pertains to the rights of Government to make the decisions that count, set the agenda, allocate resources from all sources including external avenues, and design and implement its development programs. The problem here is whose rights are they? Local ownership, properly defined, would include the various stakeholders of a developing country, not just its government (See also Baser & Morgan, 2001). Efforts are being made by Donors and Governments to move in this direction but the process is painfully slow. Governments could be seen as ownership skeptics at the early stages of negotiating a sector program, waiting to see how much *commitment* Donors would put on the table and with what conditions before deciding to get into the partnership boat and start rowing. Mackin's metaphor is apt.

Trust

The US Agency for International Development identifies the establishment of trust as the second most important stage (after "explorations") in the evolution of a partnership (USAID, 2001, p. 24). It notes that establishing trust involves paying attention to [intergovernmental and interorganizational] values and mission, cultural differences, power imbalances, transparency and working towards a formal agreement. In discussing the underlying principles of partnership, Mohiddin (1998) posits:

> Common objectives or shared interests are obviously the most powerful motives for forming a partnership; but they are not sufficient in themselves. There are other factors which are necessary for both creation and sustainable operation of a partnership. These are trust, respect, ownership and equality. Without trust between people partnership is impossible. . . . People in partnership must trust one another. But trust can not be created by the force of law, contractual or conventional requirements of a job. Trust is a product of experiences of people living and working together, of mutual expectations and of sharing common values and commitment. (p. 6).

Trust is something that bedevils the partnership between donors and recipient countries. Interpersonal relations aside, trust is the expectation by partners that reciprocal obligations would be met (Collins & Higgins, 2000, p. 22).

In development cooperation, we often focus our attention on donor-recipient relations as if organizations in and of themselves can speak and act independently of the people who run or represent the organizations. They do not. Not in an interactive social-psychological sense. It is the interaction between individuals that make or break

relationships between donor-recipient entities. Trust is an important element in engendering ownership at various levels of a cooperative enterprise. In order for a donor's field staff, for example, to take ownership of a program that is being developed for implementation in their country of assignment, its head office staff must engage the field staff in ways that ensure their buy-in and positive cooperative behaviour. There must be general agreement on program strategy and objectives. Out in the field, interaction of donor-recipient is crucial for an effective working relationship. A rigid, bureaucratic and inflexible personality is unlikely to achieve much and recipients used to the comings-and-goings of donor staff may simply choose to wait out the *troublesome* contact and hope that a more *reasonable* person would show up in due course as a replacement.

Like much of various elements of development cooperation, trust between donors and recipients as a phenomenon and how it impacts on their cooperative relationship is hardly evaluated when program or project development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation are being assessed or undertaken. A theoretical model of interpersonal trust and cooperation (Dibben, Morris & Lean, 2000) is a useful tool for analyzing trust between donor-recipient representatives, which may include consultants like me. In their theoretical model (p. 56), they identify three types of trust: dispositional, learnt and situational trust. Dispositional trust is a non-modifiable personality trait in which an individual is deemed to be trusting or not. In learnt trust, the individual's personality trait is modifiable and the individual in this case has a general tendency to trust or not to trust another specific individual. Situational trust, modifiable, "is dependent on the situational cues that modify the expression of generalized tendencies." All three types are

interrelated. In on-going interaction and discussion, situational trust is deterministic; it defines actions and behaviours at any given time and this time factor depends on each of the interacting individual's propensity or more properly disposition to trust (*dispositional trust*) and on the history of the relationship (*learnt trust*) contingent of course upon the nature of the situation.

When I started work on this chapter, I was concerned about several questions pertaining to relevance and meaning in terms of linking the literature to the stories narrated. In a posthoc and retrospective study of personal experience, such as this one, the possibility of making such linkages may seem problematic. Does the literature drive the narrative? Is the narrative intended to prove a particular theory right or wrong? Or, does the experience *speak* boldly and independently of the literature? Is there an *objective* middle ground in attempting a linkage between narratives of personal experience and an *associated* literature review, in what is largely a *reconstructive* and, by implication, subjective enterprise? My intention here is not to launch a discussion of these questions but simply to raise them as issues that I gave some thought to.

The concepts and theories reviewed – of power and partnership and of ownership and trust - certainly had some relevance and meaning, and were constantly at the back of my mind as I crafted my stories. What was the balance of power in particular situations? What kind of power was being exercised? Who was calling the shots and/or influencing whom in what direction and to what effect? These questions were not asked directly as antecedents to the narratives nor were they allowed to interfere with their flow; the literature provided me with a mental guide as I went about the crafting of the stories. The

theoretical model of interpersonal trust or *power* types, for example, informed my stories and narrative.

Chapter 3

Finding My Stories

> Stories can successfully transfer knowledge about managerial systems, norms, values and moral[s] of a company. They can be easily identified with, are powerful in transferring knowledge rich in tacit dimensions. . . . Stories allow the listener to comprehend new experiences and to make judgements about the persons, objects, and beliefs of the storyteller. Stories help [in] developing general attitudes and beliefs. (Haghirian & Chini, 2002, p. 5)

This chapter is about how I found my stories, methodologically. I discuss the tools that I used in creating and narrating the stories and the data sources that supported and complemented my *self* as principal data collection and analysis instrument. In the field, I kept a daily personal diary, made notes as I travelled from field site to field site, and took notes at interviews and meetings. While researching my personal experience, I also prepared analytic memos to myself. Since this is a posthoc, retrospective study of an area that was not of primary interest when I was in the field, I had to rely heavily on memory-work in recalling and writing the details of particular events. The analytic memos were very useful in helping me to pull together a deliberative and sense-making reflection on the interactions and situations narrated. These tools are described below. In addition, official documents of all types – memos, reports, minutes of meetings, commissioned papers – and journal articles and research papers were useful sources of information.

Tools of Inquiry and Data Sources

Personal diary

As an observer and participant-observer in donor inter-agency meetings and Donor-Government deliberations, I took notes at meetings, during formal interviews, and at workshops and briefings. In addition, I kept a personal diary in which I recorded, on a daily basis, my activities and interactions, both personal and official. I also held conversations with senior donor, NGO and government representatives at informal gatherings where points of view were exchanged on current relevant issues in more relaxed settings. My notes were targeted at the strategic document that I was to prepare for CIDA and much of what this study is about was considered somewhat irrelevant or peripheral at the time.

However, through memory-work, I was able to generate memories of conversational pieces with public and private sector officials. These reconstructed dialogues became more vivid in telling and narrating the stories presented in Chapter 4. For example, on Thursday, June 10, 1999, I made several entries in my diary covering a variety of events that took place that day: my driver's overtime work; a visitor who arrived at my office at 11:45 a.m. for a meeting that was scheduled to begin at 10:00 a.m., my contact at the Canadian High Commission who came in to see me at 12:30 p.m. and stayed (legitimately) until 3 p.m.; a Canadian consultant in town who was flown out to Nairobi on an emergency basis with a collapsed lung; a phone call from my computer repairman who was going to come and see me before dinner; a 4 o'clock meeting with a parastatal official; and, finally, the dinner I had with two top Unicef representatives to follow up on girls' basic education.

The highlight of June 10 was the meeting with the parastatal official. My diary entry for this episode read: *Had a 4 o'clock meeting with [the head of the parastatal]. Lasted about half an hour. Not much happening in terms of education programming. Had interesting things to say about life in the Southern Zone* (my earlier trip to the Zone is discussed in Chapter 4). On reviewing this encounter and reflecting on it, I wrote on the margin, . . . *did talk about seeming lack of direction at the MoEC. And donor pressure.* This led to a recall of a subsequent meeting that I had with a top official at the MoEC where, in my attempt to gauge the truth of the parastatal official's assertion, we engaged in quite an open exchange of views on Donor-Government relations. Reconstructed discourse (Holt, 2003) is always helpful in illuminating particular voices and I provide the following reconstructed version of the conversation I had with one key official:

Me:	The donors appear to be all over the map. How does it work? Do you coordinate their activities?
Official:	We are trying but it is difficult. The sector development program secretariat set up by donor support is helping to coordinate things. However, because the secretariat is not integrated into our Ministry, there is some bad blood between some of us and our colleagues who work there. As you know, they get a bigger pay and fancy offices with computers, modern filing cabinets, fax machines, cell phones, internet access and many other things that we don't have. Now they think they can order us around.
Me:	But to whom do they report?
Official:	The Ministry. But the way this thing works, I don't think we have control. If they don't behave, you know what I mean, the donors can go straight to the top and have anybody replaced. And there is

nothing we can do. Our friends there know where their bread is buttered and they follow donor instructions.

Me: Why don't you integrate the unit into your normal operations in the Ministry even if your colleagues who work downstairs in the unit get a special incentive to work there?

Official: Our Permanent Secretary is committed to that. I think it will happen but I don't know when. He will move if it is politically wise to do so.

Me: Tell me, how did this whole thing start and how was it coordinated?

Official: You should have been around! It was very interesting. The World Bank was pushing demand-side programming while Sida was doing supply-side. There was a "huge fight" between the two. So, coordination – around 1994 when the coordination efforts began – was not easy. The preparation of our Basic Education Master Plan (BEMP) was a starting, if not the rallying, point for donors' concerted efforts at coordination. There were too many vested interests. DANIDA seemed to be the principal driver at one stage. A coherent framework was needed in the form of a master plan for basic education. A task force was established to work on the framework. At this point, DfID came in and hijacked the process. My friend at DANIDA lost the battle and DANIDA was thus effectively sidelined. There was a lot of donor intrigue, it was interesting to watch as it unfolded. DfID worked the system in an attempt to move the process along, to the chagrin of some of my colleagues who felt that DfID was meddling in our internal affairs and attempting to take over.

Me: Why didn't you intervene?

Official: We couldn't. How could we? Too many things were happening and we didn't have the resources or time to respond to the games that these donors were playing. You see, there was a lot of

pushing by the donors. They wanted this, that and the other thing and we were constantly on the run trying to meet their demands. At one point, there were some 55 consultants running around in this city working for one donor agency. Can you imagine the pressure?!

Me: I have two questions but first, I understand that the District Based Support to Primary Education program, led by DANIDA, and the Swedish book program are by and large what constitutes the ESDP as it now stands. With DANIDA out of the picture, why isn't Sida coordinating the donor efforts?

Official: I really don't know how the donors work but the European Union has stepped in and is coordinating the donors. After the struggle between DfID and DANIDA, maybe Sida decided not to come forward. However, we know that the EU is using us as a pilot, a test case, for implementing SWAps. It is possible the EU was given the coordination role because of their keen interest in SWAps.

Me: I see. My other question: you talked about the World Bank and Sida engaging in demand and supply-side financing. What's your preference if you were given the option to choose?

Official: I don't think you donors quite understand. We are now being asked to consult village people in the name of this demand-side principle. Funding will only be provided if the people ask for a particular project. That's fine but you know what? As a government, it is our responsibility to provide and I'm talking about education. And if we go down to villages asking people what we should do for their children – remember these are people who aren't much educated - they'd laugh at us and think we don't know what we are doing. That would result in more pushouts or dropouts from the school system. Some will refuse to send their children to school and we certainly cannot afford that now.

Me: Do you see a role for the private sector in education provision in this country?

Official: Of course. But as you know, we are responsible for policy and setting standards and regulations. As long as these are met, anyone is free to set up a school establishment.

The foregoing is a sample of the flow of our conversation that was open and frank, and lasted for about an hour. Conversations of this kind were not uncommon and I had many of them with different public and private sector people during the course of my stay in Tanzania. They were a rich source of primary data.

Travel notes

These are the notes that I made during each visit to a field site. Although these notes did not contain direct references to the essence of the stories narrated, they helped to trigger memories of the broader context of my visit. These notes were focused on factual information on matters touching upon the nature of local organization for the provision of quality basic education. On February 20, 1999, for example, I visited a rural headteacher in the Southern Zone and noted, among other things, the following:

> 1975-1997 – no student went to secondary school. 2 went to teachers' training college. Parents contribute four thousand Tanzanian shillings (Tsh4,000/-. About Cdn$8) to school activities. Average annual income of a household is 10,000/-. Virtually all subsistence farmers. Standard 7 has 15 boys and 6 girls. Four passed (the primary school exit exams), all boys.

What I did was to review my entire travel notes for a given field trip period, e.g., the three weeks that I spent in the Southern Zone, and then attempt to recall instances where the issues of local ownership was evidently problematic, how it was being dealt with

locally, and how it related, if at all, to the national focus on an education SWAp, about which many local teachers were uninformed.

Interview Notes

In all the meetings that I had in Dar es Salaam with government officials and donor representatives, I took notes of the essential points discussed, points that were relevant to my plans in preparing a programming strategy. Many were factual information as the points were repeated by other interviewees. Others were opinions rendered on the goings-on in Dar related to the unfolding ESDP.

A typical interview with a donor representative touched on the donor's historical presence in the country, its current slate of projects or programs, level of funding being provided, future plans, collaborative interests (with other donors), and its involvement in the ESDP. Interviews with Government officials focused on organizational and capacity issues, needs and priorities, funding requirements and the workings of the ESDP.

Notes from interagency donor meetings and Donor-Government meetings complemented these bilateral interviews and were sources from which I was able to draw material for the stories narrated.

Analytic Memos

Much of the literature deals with onsite analytic memo writing (see, for example, Margot Ely's *Doing qualitative research: Circles within circles* (1991). The approach was useful in looking back at my various notes, remembering events and particular interactions and reflecting upon the specific situations that I had not considered important enough at the time to record. The written memos formed the basis of the memory-work

that I undertook to generate the material I needed for the stories narrated. I provide below two verbatim examples of my analytic memos:

i) February 20, 1999. School committee meeting in a rural area of the Southern Zone:

> Was a lively one. Elderly woman was questioning intention of government re responsibility for school management. Has implications for ownership. They didn't even seem to trust the government on this front. Many not paying their school levies. Area is poor but government seems to dismiss this. Not realistic. Government issues directives. No consultations. Doesn't help concept of ownership. Surprising but understandable the women at the meeting, if given a choice, would send only their boys to school. Serious stuff. None of them were literate. Government has work to do. Upsetting not much is happening in this area. No donor support. And government seems to be withdrawing. Hope the World Bank would get off this demand-side financing hassle. Not helping rural areas. What would I do? Maybe they too have their constraining mandates!

ii) March 9, 1999. The trusted outsider's presentation on the status of donor-government partnership – see Story III in Chapter 4:

> He did a fine job I think of presenting the facts in a neutral fashion but some colleagues felt he was out of touch with reality. Whose reality? I wonder why there's such a negative attitude in viewing government efforts. Too much competition for influence. But influence over what? All the corridor talk tended to be so anti-government. I wonder if we'd do any better if we were stuck with the sort of constraints they have. By definition, most developing countries – Tanzania is no exception – lack capacity to do many things. If they're that

> perfect, we wouldn't be needed. Am I too soft the way I see things? Perhaps my African heritage is getting in the way. But I think I'm objective. How could the donors have voted to have the CG meeting in Paris instead of Dar – especially after the President himself had asked and pleaded. Very humiliating for the country. I felt it.

The nature of this study is such that I had to go back to the sources described above, reflect on the broader contexts of specific meetings or events and the relevance they held for the partnership issues of ownership and trust. I then selected those encounters that were memorable enough to form the basis of the stories narrated. The memos were both evaluative and introspective in nature and served as accounts or records of my feelings, reactions, impulses, ideas, understandings, and problems encountered during the course of this post hoc reflective/reflexive exercise. They were a projection off the process of recalling events and remembering situational instances. They helped me to reconstruct the realities that were then at play.

Memory-work

For the storytelling in Chapter 4, I depended to a good extent on how much I could remember of particular events during the year that I spent in Tanzania. To generate the memories necessary to support the narration of the story, the memory-work method was used. A brief description of the method and how it is applied in this study is presented below. Kaufman, Ewing, Hyle, Montgomery, and Self (2001) describe memory-work as:

> a feminist research methodology that is used by research collectives to study socialization within the dominant values that make up a particular culture. The

> power of memory-work lies with its potential to interrupt hegemonic ways of seeing and knowing the world. (p. 360).

Our daily experiences provide the basis of knowledge and this feminist social constructionist method has the merit of cementing the connections between the subject and object of research (Onyx & Small, 2001, p. 775). Since the introduction by feminist-scholar Frigga Haug and her associates in 1987 of memory-work, there has been considerable interest and work by scholars and academics across a variety of disciplines in the area of memory-work (see, for example, Personal Narratives Group, 1989; Crawford, Kippax, Onyx, Gault, & Venton, 1992; Norquay, 1993; Schratz, Walker, & Schratz-Hadwich, 1995; Koutroulis, 1996; Boucher, 1997; Mitchell & Weber, 1999; Radstone, 2000; O'Reilly-Scanlon, 2000; Leavy, 2001; and Onyx & Small, 2001). It has become a powerful tool in exploring how one constructs one's own meaning of self, however the self is defined, and how existing social structures constrain or facilitate such construction (Boucher, 1997, p. 150). Memory-work is normally a collective or group endeavour and is executed in basically three phases involving (i) the collection of written memories; (ii) a collective analysis of the memories; and (iii) theorizing from the memories.

As Onyx and Small (2001, pp. 775-777) explain, in phase one, a co-researcher's reflections reveal the construction processes at play. In phase two, the co-researchers undertake a collective review of the memories in order to arrive at some common understanding and thereby, through theorizing, generate new meanings. For Crawford, phase one is the self in interaction with itself while phase two constitutes "self-feedback" – i.e., the self responding to itself as others would – thus revealing the dual nature of self

in memory-work. In the final phase, a further theorization is undertaken using the material (i.e., the written memories and the collective discussion or analysis of the memories) generated from phases one and two.

Generally, the following procedural steps (as described by Onyx & Small, citing Haug) are followed in doing memory-work.

- Write 1 or 2 pages about a particular episode, action, or event (referred to by researchers as a *trigger* or *cue*);
- Write in the third person using a pseudonym;
- Write in as much detail as possible, including even what might be considered to be trivial or inconsequential; and
- Describe the experience, do not import interpretation, explanation, or biography.

For Phase two, similar steps are followed:

i) Each memory-work group member expresses opinions and ideas about each written memory in turn;

ii) The collective looks for similarities and differences between the memories. The group members look for continuous elements among the memories whose relation to each other is not immediately apparent. Each member should question particularly those aspects of the events that do not appear amenable to comparison, without resorting to biography.

iii) Each member identified clichés, generalizations, contradictions, cultural imperatives, metaphor, etc. This is one way of identifying the markers of

the "taken-for-granted" social explication of the meaning of recurring events;

iv) The group discusses theories, popular conceptions, sayings, and images about the topic, again as a way of identifying the common social explication of meaning around the topic;

v) The group also examines what is not written in the memories (but that might be expected to be). Silences are sometimes eloquent pointers to issues of deep significance but are painful or particularly problematic to the author;

vi) The memory may be rewritten.

Since my research is an individual effort, without co-researchers from whose reviews, feedback and analyses I could benefit, I have adapted the group-oriented method of memory-work for my purpose based partially on the protocol for individual memory-work suggested by Mitchell and Weber (1999, pp. 46-73). This protocol involves a two-step approach in which a first draft is produced. The memory or memories are then contested to determine what is left out and why; and/or what is missed and the gaps that need to be filled in. After interrogating the first draft in this way, a second draft is written.

Time constraint did not allow me a possible alternative option, that of the luxury of sharing the reconstructions with colleagues who were either with me in Tanzania at the time or were in similar settings elsewhere in order to sift and sort out the *truth*. However, my adaptation and use of memory-work procedures helped to create the enabling

memories that I required. I will now address how I used memory-work to generate the stories narrated.

The First Step. The initial step was the process of producing a first draft, itself undertaken in two parts: a quick jotting down of memories in phrases, followed by a written, expanded piece done in prose. For this first step, certain places, individuals or moments would trigger a memory, which I needed to capture on paper. I would quickly jot down, in phrases or bullet form, and in as much detail as I could remember, the memories as they streamed into my consciousness. I paid no particular attention, at this stage, to narrative form, i.e., first or third person narrative, and made no attempt to screen in or out what might turn out to be important or insignificant occurrences. The important thing was to make those jot-downs – as much as I could remember. I would then cast my notes aside for several hours or even for a day or so before coming back to them. A reworking of the draft jottings was produced following this return to my notes, this time in prose, refining it but undertaking no analysis or the passing of any judgement on the value of the memories, i.e., interrogating lapses or assertions for their veracity, sensitivity or particular sensibilities. Here is a simple example to illustrate how the process evolved from random jottings during Step I to a short analytical text in Step II. The subject matter or heading was the thought that triggered the memory. The jot-downs and text are how I described the memory.

Example: The Excited Telephone Operator

Jottings: Visit to remote location in one of the poorer districts in Lindi. Lindi is poorest region in the country. Hardly any visitors come – donors or government officials. Learning environment in very poor shape. Lack of facilities. Untrained

> teachers. Failing students. Officers transferred there saw selves in transit. Didn't take their families along. Inspectors unable to inspect schools. No cars. No fuel. Parents disenchanted with poor school system and lack of further schooling beyond Standard 7. Kids without uniforms sent home. Intake system doesn't favour girls. Conditions very poor. Telephone operator insisted on talking with me.

These jottings provided the memory *ticklers*, the base of thoughts that enabled me to explore particular recollections. Upon returning to these notes, I worked on a fleshed out draft, this time writing more formally and in the third person, using imaginary names, in order to create some personal distance and allow for some measure of objective presentation. Although the jottings are refined and re-arranged, I still did not undertake any analysis or the passing of any judgement on the value of the memories. Here is the draft text that followed:

> After a very tiring drive on some pretty bad roads, Wilson and Jack eventually arrived in a remote town in Lindi Region in the Southern Zone of the country. Lindi happens to be the poorest Region in the country, experiencing harsh social and economic conditions. The visitors were very warmly received by the local officials who seemed genuinely pleased to see them. They were provided with refreshments and Wilson was conducted around the small facility and introduced to the key officers present.
>
> The telephone operator insisted on speaking with Wilson. When they were connected, she commended Wilson for daring to visit because visitors hardly came to see them due to their isolation and the bad roads, let alone people from

far away Dar es Salaam. She wanted to be assured that it was not a hoax being pulled on her by her colleagues.

Educational achievement in the Region is generally poor. Many of the teachers are untrained and unqualified and often deal with large classes and kids who come to school hungry. Officials lament the poor state of their school inspectorate system. Lack of transportation had made it impossible for inspectors to do their jobs. Teachers in dire need of support and coaching were consequently denied the help that they needed, resulting in a vicious circle of neglect and failure.

Housing for teachers was scarce. The community needed to build more classrooms and teachers' houses to encourage enrolment and the recruitment and/or retention of teachers. That was now the responsibility of local communities as mandated by a directive from the central government in Dar es Salaam. However, parents were very poor and many were unable to make the contributions required. Some could not even afford to provide their children with the compulsory school uniforms that they must wear to school. A headteacher claimed that school children learned better when they came to school in uniforms.

The second Step. The transition to Step II was a deliberate exercise in contesting the memories; in considering what mistaken assumptions I might have made and what was included that was not so important and why I came to this realization. For example, in Step I, I had written that "A headteacher claimed that school children learned better when they came to school in uniforms." Using the word "claimed" implies disbelief and disagreement with what probably was borne out of the headteacher's long experience in

teaching and administration. So this was picked up in Step II. Another example is the question I asked of myself concerning those transferees who saw their stay in that rural setting as a temporary sojourn and were there without their families. Of what significance is this recollection? What did it mean? Was it unique? In the end, I concluded that it was not an uncommon practice in the country and dropped it in the write-up for Step II.

If I deemed it necessary to go on to a Step II, writing continued in the third person. Otherwise, I left the text unchanged and proceeded straight to an examination of the implications of the notes. Once I had reflected on the details of the first draft text so as to ferret out what meanings the details held for the local context, as well as for my practice, I used elements of the first draft and the reflections of the second step to construct and narrate the stories presented. The second step was, therefore, essentially the analytical stage in which I tried to make sense of the circumstances described. The following is the reflection that followed my review of the first draft:

> Wilson found it difficult to understand why there was so very little support going to this poorest-of-the-poor region, Lindi. Even though Donors were making poverty reduction their overarching goal in development assistance, they seemed to be shying away from involvement in this region. This did not bode well for their credibility even though they meant well in their general rhetoric and approach to the problem. Even more disturbing was the devolution of responsibility for local schools to communities. These communities were not consulted on the decentralization of education provision and management and did not seem to trust the government's intentions and plans. This had implications for

local ownership of the development process and the demand-side financing that was driving the country's local government reform.

Wilson was surprised to learn that school uniforms could make a difference in the learning and performance of a pupil but realized, on reflection, that if a child felt different and *isolated* from his or her school mates on account of not having a school uniform, and if allowed to stay in school, the child's learning and performance could be affected. The constant worry and tension that this child might feel within her/him could be distracting to the point where self-esteem and good performance might be endangered.

Parents experienced difficulty meeting some of their community obligations to contribute to the construction of school facilities and houses for teachers. Average annual income per capita was very low in the region and it was unrealistic to expect so much from them. Unfortunately, government did not appear to understand their pecuniary circumstances, choosing instead to dismiss any talk of abolishing the levies as premature and unwarranted. They held the strong view that these parents should have no problem meeting their obligations. They just did not want to pay. But it was hard to fault the parents for not wanting to because the quality of education was so low they could not tell the difference between the kids in school and those who remained at home.

I used these notes to think when it came time to construct and tell the stories in Chapter 4. I used them to think about particular characters, to sketch out scenes and plots and some of the tensions that served to shed light on the contradictions inherent in the Centre-Periphery and Donor-Government relationships.

Telling the Stories

In reflecting back on some of the tensions and contradictions that made the deliberative environment in Dar at times quite delicate, I chose situations that were memorable as a backdrop for the storytelling. They embodied nuances in the discourse on such partnership principles as ownership and trust and, in many ways, represented the dilemma that the donors and their host government were experiencing at the time. Details on how the stories were constructed and told are presented in the next chapter. As I outlined in Chapter 1, this thesis draws on storytelling to narrate the stories from the field. It also draws on the interpretive anthropology of Clifford Geertz in structuring and telling the stories.

Epistemic Orientation

On Reflexivity, Reflective Practice and Autoethnography

Reflecting on one's own experiences in order to reconstruct reality or extract meaning from a complex and dynamic, often fluid, situation, as was my own case in Tanzania, poses a number of methodological questions. Reflexivity, reflective practice and autoethnography are particular epistemic ways in which a researcher like me doing a post hoc retrospective study can tackle the complexities of self in a researcher-researched, subject-object context, particularly one in which the researcher, like me, is the main instrument through which data is sourced.

Reflexivity and Reflective Practice. Reflexivity is a multidimensional concept that means different things to different people, depending on the context in question (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p. 248; Ruby, 1998; Carson, 1991, 1995, 1997). It is an analytical process that involves self-confrontation (Beck, 2002). It interrogates the

influence that the researcher's personal reactions, unconscious needs, thinking and responses have on the research process and sheds light on the positionality or role of the researcher who is seen as an active participant out there in the field rather than as a passive or invincible observer (Finlay, 2002).

Variants of reflexivity are such that they have been classified into various categories by authors who wanted to contextualize its different meanings. Thus, reflexivity could be introspection, intersubjective reflection, a mutual collaboration, social critique or discursive deconstruction. This is collapsible into the *personal*, i.e., a reflexivity that involves a "continual evaluation of our subjective response," *social* - reflexivity dealing with the dynamics of relationships, and *methodological* - a method of research. (Finlay, 2002). For Finlay, reflexivity "is reflecting on one's own personal reactions or unconscious needs, as well as reflecting on the dynamics of the researcher-researched relationship and how the research is co-constituted." Foley (2002) has a similar categorization, differentiated into four types of reflexivity: the confessional, the theoretical, the textual, and the deconstructive.

Can reflexivity and reflective practice be used interchangeably to mean the same thing or are they quite different in meaning? Reflexivity is regarded indeed by some as little more than benign introspection or a form of reflection in which the researcher engages in a process of inward-looking to reflect upon or think about how his or her experiences may have influenced such reflection or thinking (Taylor & White, 2000, p. 6). Reflexivity of this kind is a loose injunction to think about what one is doing and as such is used interchangeably with reflective practice. Alvesson & Skoldberg (2000) introduce a nuanced distinction:

> Reflexivity [is] about 'ways of seeing which act back on and reflect existing ways of seeing' . . . . The word 'reflexive' has a double meaning, also indicating that the levels are reflected in one another. A dominating level, for instance, can thus contain reflections of other levels. Two or more levels may be in a state of interaction, mutually affecting one another. We will denote this double nature by the term reflexive. 'Reflective,' on the other hand, we reserve for that aspect which consists of the focused reflections upon a specific method or level of interpretation. Most other authors seem to use the term reflexive in this sense (p. 248).

Taylor and White (2000) argue that reflexivity is more than just a benign introspection For them, researchers

> need to undertake a process of 'epistemic reflexivity' in which we subject our own knowledge claims to critical analysis. In the social work context, White has suggested that "epistemic reflexivity may only be achieved by social workers becoming aware of the dominant professional constructions influencing their practice. (p. 6)

> We are not interested simply in what we have done and how we have gone about things when we reflect on our practice, we must also concern ourselves with the (tacit) assumptions we are making about people, their problems and their needs when we apply knowledge about child development, mental health, learning disability and so forth. This helps us to focus on the ways that "the identities and needs that the social welfare system fashions for its recipients are interpreted identities and

> needs. Moreover, they are highly political interpretations; and, as such, are in principle open to dispute. Yet these needs and identities are not always recognized as interpretations. Too often, they simply go without saying and are rendered immune from analysis and critique. (p. 35).

In other words, not only must the researcher be concerned with how research is conducted, self-disclosure of self – of own beliefs, biases and feelings in context – and an understanding of how the process of research work affects, impacts and shapes research outcomes must also inform the skill and knowledge of the researcher (Hardy, Phillips & Clegg, 2001, pp. 531-560; McIlvenny, 1993). For practitioners, they need to take cognizance of, and be more open and explicit, about their use and application of practice-specific knowledge in a way that enables them to make sense of particular events, happenings and situations. "This might be seen as a process of destabilizing taken-for-granted ideas and professional routines" (Taylor & White, 2000. p. 6). Thus critical reflection practitioners engage in investigating moral and ethical issues vis-à-vis the underlying assumptions of their profession (Kemmis, 1987); the process of research becomes one of self-reconstruction in a social sense as we are also engaged in object-construction (Alvesson & Skoldberg, pp. 245-246). Reflective practice generates experiential knowledge (Wright, 2003); as he posits about reflective practitioners and their work:

> When they are effective, all of these practitioners display the same sequence of eclectic action and reflection that propels them towards mastery of their field. They typically draw on some body of theoretical knowledge and understanding to plan, design and prepare for their work. They then do their work (practice) and

> they also reflect on what they do in order to learn how to do things better over time. This is the essence of experience! (p. 6).

That brings me to the subject of autoethnography.

Autoethnography. Autoethnography speaks to the nature of reflexivity and reflective practice – whether we are looking at bounded dialectic connections or some configuration of paradoxes – and underscores for me the tenets of the qualitative model of inquiry. I review below the basic elements of the concept of autoethnography and conclude the section with how it related to my own work. For autoethnographers, narrative inquiry, for example,

> would be stories that create the effect of reality, showing characters embedded in the complexities of lived moments of struggle, resisting the intrusions of chaos, disconnection, fragmentation, marginalization, and incoherence, trying to preserve or restore the continuity and coherence of life's unity in the face of unexpected blows of fate that call one's meanings and values into question. . . . The stories we write put us into conversation with ourselves as well as with our readers. In conversation with ourselves, we expose our vulnerabilities, conflicts, choices and values. We take measure of our uncertainties, our mixed emotions, and the multiple layers of our experience. Our accounts seek to express the complexities and difficulties of coping and feeling resolved, showing how we changed over time as we struggled to make sense of our experience (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, pp. 744 & 748).

Alsop (September 2002), citing Deborah E. Reed-Danahay, defines autoethnography as "an attempt at practicing this self-reflexivity by having a closer look

at one's own longings and belongings, with the familiarity that – when viewed from a distance – it can change one's perspective considerably." (para. 2). This change comes about when the autoethnographer places the self within a social context by connecting the personal and the cultural. Such self-reflexivity brings into view and consciousness in the autoethnographer's epistemic radar screen his or her processes of knowledge generation; positionality and that old notion of Centre-Periphery; anxieties, guises, joys and values - all summed up in a general or specific frame of mind; and of course one's relative power given particular contexts. Ellis and Bochner (2000) see autoethnography as:

> an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural. Back and forth autoethnographers gaze, first through an ethnographic wide-angle lens, focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of their personal experience; then, they look inward, exposing a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract, and resist cultural interpretations. As they zoom backward and forward, inward and outward, distinctions between the personal and cultural become blurred, sometimes beyond distinct recognition. . . . In these texts, concrete action, dialogue, emotion, embodiment, spirituality, and self-consciousness are featured, appearing as relational and institutional stories affected by history, social structure, and culture, which themselves are dialectically revealed through action, feeling, thought, and language. (p. 739).

Located as it is at the boundaries of scientific research, autoethnography presents the researcher with epistemic difficulty vis-à-vis representation and legitimation (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Coffey, 1999; Sparkes, 2000). Relying on memory-work, as I have, to

(re)construct and tell my story, and using self as the predominant vehicle for data collection, I find that autoethnography afforded me a writing style that involves a highly personal and contextualized rendition of storytelling, drawing on my own personal experience to invoke and underscore some understanding of a specific regime of interaction, i.e., of Donor-Government partnership and some of its underlying issues. I am particularly drawn to the idea that my authorial emic voice is not excluded in my findings presentation (Charmaz & Mitchell, 1997) as autoethnography is about confronting dominant forms of representation and consequently allowing for a reclamation, "through self-reflective response, representational spaces" hitherto unavailable to those at the "borders" (Tierney, 1998, p. 66).

Qualitative research is a more appropriate approach for a study of this kind that seeks to understand phenomena in a context-specific setting. It enables the researcher, acting as the *human instrument* of data collection, and in observing, describing and interpreting the settings as they are, to pay attention to the structural or behavioural characteristics peculiar to an individual, a group or an organization. The interpretive character of qualitative research allows for discovery of the meaning that events hold for individuals or organizations that experience them and the researcher's own interpretations of those meanings (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990; Eisner, 1991; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Although the etic voice is important in telling this story, gaining the emic perspective is central to qualitative research and is also instrumental in triangulating data. Of importance of course is the meaning that is mediated through the researcher's own perceptions (Zonabend, 1992; Merriam, 1998), a perspective stance that "helps the

researcher to make conceptual and theoretical sense of the phenomenon (under study) in terms of the researcher's professional experience." (Winegardner, 2000).

Krieger (1991) makes the point that our external reality is inseparable from our inner reality, that is the knowledge we have already acquired based on our lives and experiences. Accounts of personal experience therefore may be seen as bordering on solipsism, the idea that the self is the only reality that can be known and verified (Krueger 2002) but as Mehra (2002) remarks:

> Make sure that your interpretations and analyses sound credible or ring true in light of the data they present as evidence for your conclusions. Also, that the interpretations are presented in a way that allows readers to see why the research reached a certain conclusion based on the available data.

The available data can be collected through a number of different methods: field notes of experiences and shared experiences, journal records, interview transcripts, others' observations, storytelling, letter writing, autobiographical writing, and documents of various types (Hogan, 1998).

Truthvalue in Storytelling

The responsibility of the storyteller is quite a serious matter. It cannot be taken lightly. As Robert A. Williams, Jr., notes (quoted in "The research mathematician as a storyteller" by Velez and Watkins, 2002):

> In the Native American tradition, to assume the role of Storyteller is to take on a very weighty vocation. The shared life of a people as a community is defined by an intricate web of connections: kinship and blood, marriage and friendship, alliance and solidarity. In the Indian way, the Storyteller is the one who bears the

> heavy responsibility for maintaining all of these connections. . . . The good Storytellers [are] the ones who are most listened to and trusted in the tribe.

To be so listened to and trusted in any tribe, including that of the aid donor community which can modestly lay claim to some level and variant of kinship and blood and of marriage and friendship, one has to be able to tell compelling stories that resonate with, and holds meaning for, the listeners or readers, be they insiders or outsiders. However, I am mindful of my position as an insider-narrator for, as Stromquist (2000) argues,

> Qualitative approaches are more responsive to the insiders' views and definition of the situation, but the researcher – as the ultimate writer – has control over the selection of 'relevant' data. Because of this, the position of the researcher is at all times a delicate matter and cannot be taken for granted or be beyond reproach. (p. 150).

The truth can be told even when the participant-researcher is submerged in subjectivity. The *trick* is to be open about one's biases and acknowledge them, and let the listeners or readers make of it what they may. This is better than pretending that the data under review had legs of its own and just walked into our lives and organized itself – and *viola,* there's our objective reality! By adopting a formalistic stance in which a passive use of language might have betrayed a pretence to objectivity, the personal baggage I brought to this undertaking could have been conveniently hidden and constituted a dangerously false picture of the contextual reality described.

A study such as this one in search of understanding and meaning is better represented when I offer a direct interpretation and narrative of my perception of reality or what happened in key contexts in order to "optimize the opportunity of the reader to

gain experiential understanding of the case" (Stake, 1995, p. 40). The overarching epistemological framework that informed my storytelling is the narrative method, buttressed by a self-reflexive/reflective approach that is appropriate for my purpose as

> [it] describes data based on the researcher's intuition and judgment rather than as a result of categorizing it . . . reflective analysis is ideal for thick description, in which the researcher attempts to depict and conceptualize a phenomenon by recreating it contextually accompanied by the meanings and intentions inherent in the actual situation. (Winegardner, 2000).

Intuition and judgement could be very subjective but the role and experience of a researcher can contribute significantly to a study such as mine, as these attributes can influence the researcher's perceptions and perspectives as indeed they did in my case (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, pp. 86-87). Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Guba and Lincoln (1989) have looked at the issue of trustworthiness in qualitative research and contested the appropriateness of internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity[12] as criteria for evaluating qualitative research. They proposed instead the concepts of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as parallel or analogous criteria for assessing the rigour of qualitative research. These alternative concepts are briefly reviewed below

The concept of *credibility* is to qualitative research what *internal validity* is to quantitative research (see Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990). Internal validity

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[12] They defined these elements as follows: i) *internal validity*: the extent to which variations in an outcome or dependent variable can be attributed to controlled variation in an independent variable; (ii) *external validity*: inference that the presumed causal relationship can be generalized across alternate measures of cause and effect and across different types of persons, settings and times; (iii) *reliability*: consistency of a given inquiry - is generally a precondition for validity. It refers to a study's consistency, predictability, dependability, stability and/or accuracy. Reliability typically rests on replication; and (iv) *objectivity*: neutrality, a demonstration that the inquiry is free of bias, values and/or prejudice (Crawford, et al, 2000).

represents the degree to which an observer's perception can be said to reflect some reality (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, p. 32). In qualitative data interpretation and presentation, credibility is engendered when there is "'truth,' value, or 'believability' (in) the findings that have been established by the researcher through prolonged observations, engagements, or participation with informants or the situation in which cumulative knowing is the 'believable' or live-through experiences of those studied" (Leininger, 1994, p. 105; see also Sandelowski, 1986). Credibility is enhanced as the researcher interprets his or her own behaviour and experiences vis-à-vis those of his/her subjects. It is important however to conduct oneself such that the feelings, perceptions and experiences of participants can fully emerge.

Credibility, ultimately, is about the degree of openness and frankness that is evinced by the narrator, whose story's relevance resonates and is appreciated by the other or the reader, particularly those with experiences of similar situations. The stories I tell of my field trips and the interpretation of the meanings that I attach to certain events are borne out of, and influenced by, strong emotions and experience. I make no pretense to portraying an absolute truth as that may be impossible but by describing situations in detail, I hope to convey as truthfully as possible the stories told.

Transferability is analogous to external validity or generalizability. Since the goal of qualitative research is not to generalize but to bring about greater, in-depth understanding of a particular situation or phenomenon, transferability refers to the degree to which the specific results of a qualitative study can be transferred to another setting that is similar without losing the unique meanings and interpretations that were derived from the original study (Leininger, 1994, pp. 106-107). Thus, while established causality

permits generalization (for the criterion of external validity in quantitative research to apply), in qualitative research, it is the shared experiences of a given community that enables them to confirm the applicability and meaningfulness of the research findings in question (Sandelowski, 1986, p. 32). Guba and Lincoln (1981, p. 120) also related the issue of transferability to how the research data fits with the researcher's findings and how the context of the findings fits with some other context in which the findings are to be applied.

Dependability is the *equivalent* of reliability in quantitative research. The latter assumes replicability; that is, a demonstration that the same results can be obtained with a repeated observation (Trochim, 2002). The implicit concern in this assumption is the stability of data over time but "Since there can be no validity without reliability (and thus no credibility without dependability), a demonstration of the former is sufficient to establish the latter" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316).

In my experience of development assistance and cooperation, my experience in Tanzania might indeed reflect the situation in other African contexts with a similar system of governance and culture. The stories I narrate in the next chapter would thus be reliable.

Confirmability is analogous to objectivity. While, in quantitative research, situational definitions are based on measures regarded as value-free, thus objective, in qualitative research, which is value-laden, reliance is on interpretation of contexts derived from a researcher's unique perspective. The dependence on subjective experience that underpins the qualitative research paradigm renders *classic* objectivity almost irrelevant for inquiries undertaken under the rubric of qualitative research. According to Crawford,

Leybourne, and Arnott (2000), confirmability "is the need to show that data, interpretations and outcome of inquiries are rooted in contexts and persons apart from the evaluator and are not simply figments of the evaluator's imagination." (para. 25). It is important, therefore, for the researcher to report his or her data in ways that are confirmable, if need be, e.g., the use of alternative sources to verify or confirm the data (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, p. 126).

While the foregoing are good measures that can be applied to a narrative account, as already mentioned, each researcher-narrator must determine his or her own criterion for evaluating their work. In this regard, the ideas of a narrative's *reportability* and *credibility* (Labov, 2002) appeals to me. Reportability is the extent to which the reader's interest in the narrative is sustained. Credibility addresses the degree to which the reader is prepared to believe that the account being rendered of events did occur in the manner in which the narrator has described them. Engaging in self-reflexivity renders transparent my own role and biases and makes the *reception* process easier for the reader.

In this chapter, I have discussed the process I went through to create and narrate the stories from the field that are the subject of Chapter 4. I also reviewed the philosophical assumptions that informed the constructing and telling of the stories. How the stories are constructed and told is described in the introductory section of the next chapter.

Limitations of the Study

In doing this work, my main goal was to shed some light on the dynamic nature of donor-recipient relationships as they are played out in the field, albeit as experienced from the vantage point of one participant-observer, i.e., me. I have no illusions about its

potential to make a difference in the lives of ordinary Tanzanians. That task and goal are beyond the scope of this study.

Clearly, the fact that the study is very much based on the particular perspectives of one individual *insider* in development cooperation, and one that relies entirely on the self as instrument and memory as tool renders it *problematic* in terms of the many limitations that it may have. A post-hoc and retrospective study of this kind necessarily relies on reconstruction based on one's recollection of events and may result in less than profound insights into the subject matter, largely because of the lack of a plurality of viewpoints from other participants in the SWAp arrangements under review. The study refers to only one year in the life of a country where we know there are many challenges. Like the CUSO volunteers who were anxious to make a big impact during the two years of their stay in a country, donors generally focus on short-term interventions but know that the impact of their interventions takes much longer for the interventions to make a difference in the life of a country. And I, of course, have to ask the question, how would the study be different if I had set out to study Donor-Government partnerships in a SWAp setting in the first place? There are very real limitations with this kind of post hoc, retrospective work.

Chapter 4

Field-Sourced Tales

Introducing the Chapter

Here I tell stories from the field. My purpose in this storytelling is to provide a window through which the reader can see, feel and sense some of the drama that was unfolding in the partnership between the Donors and the Government of Tanzania as they sought ways to put in place a development program for the country's education sector and what the relationship revealed about the partnership. The stories I tell revolve around three memorable occurrences that took place largely during the eventful months of March and April 1999. The ESDP was being reviewed by a team of independent local and foreign appraisers, a review that was followed by Donor and Government deliberations on the appraisal. At the end of each story, I reflect critically on the story just told.

There were some 14 active aid donors, both Multilateral (e.g., the EU, World Bank, and UNICEF) and Bilateral (e.g., CIDA, Sida, and DfID), in play at the time that I was in Tanzania. Each had its corporate personality and cast of personalities who gave concrete meaning to the relationships they struck or sought to strike with their government counterparts. The Donors were therefore by no means monolithic in their nature and composition. However, in Tanzania, the donors constituted themselves as a group wishing to speak with one voice in their dealings with the Government. For this reason, I have chosen throughout my text creation to refer to donors in a collective singular form, as either Donor, Donors, or donor community. Incidentally, other writers and evaluators have adopted the same approach (Helleiner, 1995, 1999; Wangwe, 2002).

As discussed in Chapter 2, ownership and trust together form a glue that holds and sustains a partnership. Trust, in particular, is the constant or common thread that is inextricably interwoven with, and holds intact, other vital concepts such as leadership, accountability, and coordination in partnerships. The accounts that I render in the stories I tell touch upon and tease out, respectively, the themes of trust and ownership as underlying problems. In *The Big No Show*, the underlying problem was the lack of trust that seemed to govern the relationship between the two parties, Donors and the Government, so much so that there appeared to be a complete breakdown in communication. In *Grassroots Encounters*, the perceived level of trust and ownership were central to the behaviour of local actors. In *A Trusted Outsider*, the full range of the central issues of trust and ownership was at play. As such, in telling the stories, and in my attempt to render a thorough comprehension and description of an event as Clifford Geertz (1973) would suggest, I have not given the same breadth and depth of descriptive detail to each story. The nature of each story demanded a differential treatment.

The first story I tell is about an episode, in the relationship between the Donors and the Government, in which an apparent breakdown in communication led to a futile dance of indignant human lament. I call this story *The Big No-Show Episode* because it was about the Government - without ceremony, circumstance or protocol - cancelling an important meeting at the very last minute, a meeting to which the Government itself had invited the Donors. The Donors had prepared and flown in their representatives and consultants from abroad for the momentous occasion only to find that it was not to be. Worse, they could not offer any cogent explanation to their representatives and consultants as to why such a thing would ever happen except to blame it on a

Government that was assumed to be inept and inconsiderate. I tell this story to illustrate how misplaced indignations, perhaps propelled by the certain knowledge of an unchallengeable power advantage, could sour relationships and do serious damage to the trust that is sorely needed in the kind of partnership that both parties professed to embrace and pursue.

My second story, *Grassroots Encounters in the Field*, is about the close encounters that I was privileged to have with local officials, school committee members, headteachers, teachers and pupils in one of my field trips to the southern Regions of Lindi, Mtwara and Ruvuma, the poorest area of the country and one that was not well served by either the Government or the Donors. The deliberation between the Donors and the Government was ultimately about *partnership* in pursuit of the development of a sector program. It was also about *ownership*, a key principle underlying the concept of partnership. Such partnerships are more than just relationships between central governments and the donor community. For them to fruitfully gel, they must include other less powerful stakeholders, all the way down to the local levels, whose interest and buy-in, by virtue of national policy configurations that mandate their involvement, as was the case in Tanzania, must be consistently nurtured. I expand on this concept of multiple partnerships in the concluding chapter.

The encounters I recount in this story are designed to show how well-meaning policies and programs, without due consultations with those who would ultimately be affected, could lead to lack of confidence and trust in central government planning and intentions. When that happens, ownership is the resulting collateral damage. In a way, it also illustrates the need to deconstruct the expert, which I guess I was, who comes into

these situations with ready-made answers and may miss out on the uniqueness and subtleties of local wisdom and applied solutions.

I end my storytelling with a particular encounter in which *A Trusted Outsider Encounters the Players*. The trusted outsider had been invited by both the Government of Tanzania and the Donors to head a team of impartial observers to undertake some kind of mediation in the relationship between the two parties. This story is about the outsider's verbal progress report that he presented to a gathering of Government officials, Donor representatives, and a few attendees representing the NGO community. In narrating this last story, I drew heavily from Gerald Helleiner's report entitled "Changing Aid Relationships in Tanzania December 1997 through March 1999" (23 March 1999). By design and expectation, it was about the state of Government-Donor (and other) partnership. My interest in telling this particular story stems from the desire to shed light on moments of truth, so to speak, that devalue or give lie to the rhetoric of ownership. Such behaviour generates deep-seated mistrust on the part of the less powerful party, in this case the Government, which was forced to do what it would not otherwise do. The cumulative effects of such relationships point in the direction of a patronage relationship rather than a true partnership as defined in the literature. I now turn, in the next section, to how I constructed and told these stories.

Constructing and Telling the Story

On the Construction

As noted in Chapter 3, for the reconstructed representation of my experiences in the field, I relied on memory-work in building my stories. I anchored my writing of the stories in the tradition of interpretive and postmodern anthropology, which calls for

contexts and events to be richly described and in ways (through epic and heroic narratives) that prioritized my authorial voice (Geertz, 1973. 1983; Clifford, 1986, 1988). And as Richardson (1994) would suggest, it invariably involved my creating me as narrator out of a process of telling a true life story that was based on complex personal and Donor-Government relationships, thus revealing my own experiences, worldview and biases. These experiences and standpoints shaped my understanding and interpretation of the data generated. The statistical information presented was derived from my travel notes and memos.

Putting each story piece together began with a review of my field notes, written at various times in 1999 and as a means to interrogating the nature of the relationships that were at play at the Centre and at the Periphery, I selected mainly the themes of trust and ownership. These themes were selected because they are critical elements in determining the degree to which a relationship, as portrayed in the literature, can be regarded as a partnership. This prior review exercise and theme selection was designed to give structure and focus to the building and telling of the story. I then proceeded to reflect on particular events or episodes by thinking about how they unfolded, followed by jottings that served as memory ticklers and triggers, including as much detail as I could recall. In the first story told for example, *The Big No Show Episode*, I had jotted down in telegraphic form:

> Post-appraisal conference cancelled. Unceremoniously. Donors up in arms. Why? Strange donor behaviour. But why are we in Tanzania? If perfect, we won't be needed. Ministry no big help. Gosh, we're pushing so hard. But why? No way

to generate mutual trust. Who owns this thing anyway? Very patronizing. This is not partnership.

These jottings helped me to think some more about the episode and to create the memory I required to tell the story in a coherent and detailed fashion. Employing the memory-work method, I wrote in the third person to begin with in order to establish some personal distance and allow for some measure of objective assessment. The next step involved the production of a draft-written memory piece based on my initial telegraphic jottings. I continued writing in the third person and then reflected on the details of the written draft in a bid to ferret out what meanings the details held. Finally, I reviewed the memory generated to see what specific meanings it had for the drama that was being systematically revealed and for me, reflexively, as a development cooperation practitioner. I then produced another, more polished draft. These written memories are then used to construct my stories.

Time constraint did not allow me the luxury of widely sharing my reconstructed representations with colleagues who were either with me in Tanzania at the time or were in similar settings elsewhere in order to sift and sort out the *truth.*

On the Telling

The telling of true life stories of complex situations and circumstances dramatized in a variety of relationships – personal, group, community and/or corporate – reveal the emotions and beliefs, the interests and biases, that the narrators of these stories bring to their craft (see, for example, Brock-Utne, 2000; Parpart, 2000, 1995; Crewe & Harrison, 1998; Chambers, 1997; Rich, 1994; and Tendler, 1975). As I have indicated in the preceding sub-section, I am no different. Seeking to interpret and at the same time

represent the donor community, of which I am a part, inevitably allows some tension to creep into my telling of the story. But such tensions, borne out of my field experiences, and underscored by the tone and form of my narrative, simply reflect the positioning of my *self*, armed with an insider voice, and of others. It is an ethnographic approach that helps to improve validity (Lather, 1993).

In telling the story, it was important for me to identify those events that were more significant in shaping relationships, or the lack of relationships, on the ground in the hinterland, at the Centre and between the Centre and the Periphery as the ESDP drama was unfolding. I sorted out timelines and sequences of events, such that they related to the central issue of the ESDP development and deliberations. These deliberations had inherent in them tension points which served as plot lines for the story. Placing the plots in space and time required an examination of the scene, that is to say the physical and social environment, time or period, the character and behaviour of the actors, and some contextualization of particular places. Thus, I now turn to the mini-stories and begin my first story by describing in as detailed a form as possible the general environment within which the ESDP was taking place.

Story I: The Big No-Show Episode

In less than ten minutes in a car ride along the scenic Ocean Road, a mariner drive which overlooks the Indian Ocean, north of the State House, lies an off ramp that cuts a tidy path through the east end of Dar es Salaam's lovely but not-so-green golf course. This ramp will take the driver on to Garden Avenue and soon to the intersection of Garden Avenue and Mirambo Street where "Canada House," the Canadian High Commission, is located in Dar es Salaam ("Haven of Peace," in Kiswahili, interpreted

more generally as the "Port of Peace). The European Union rents part of this building as its offices. Just across the street from Canada House is the Swedish Embassy, part of which houses the Finnish Embassy as well. And about a block north is located the Norwegian Embassy. Further south, heading in the direction of downtown, is the Danish Embassy. The *like-minded Donors* are within walking distance of each other.

As coordinator of Donors' efforts in Tanzania, the EU normally hosted Donors' meetings inside its side of the fortified Canada House although, on occasion, another donor agency would offer its offices for a meeting. At the gate, private uniformed security guards zealously searched the bags, briefcases, or whatever else the visitors were carrying. A hand-held electronic scanning device of the visitor's wear and body completed the search, and assuming the visitor gave the guards no cause for alarm, he or she was waved off in the general direction of the front door of Canada House. There to the right of the partitioned building, the visitor reported to a receptionist who demanded to know what the visitor's business was about and how she could help. Most receptionists happened to be women, an issue I was not courageous enough to *observe* openly. "Here to attend the Donors' meeting. From CIDA," I usually would announce. "Your name, sir?" For the umpteenth time, I would reply "Willie Clarke-Okah. From CIDA. Next door," and introducing my call card with its bold red and white and maple leaf design as evidence. At this point, after contemplating the card, she pressed an electronic button and invited me to enter. As a visitor, I made my entry, sometimes tentatively, hoping there weren't any more *checkpoints,* and feeling truly privileged to be allowed into the ground floor of the sanctum of the EU. Impressive. The show was about to begin as the other Donors representatives went through their security checks and filed in.

The Donors and the Ministry of Education and Culture had agreed, prior to the March 1999 appraisal of the ESDP, and confirmed again during the appraisal, that a follow-up general meeting, or conference as it was called, would be held on April 28, 1999 to review the recommendations of the program appraisers, some 50 individuals – local and international - selected by the Donors and the Government of Tanzania. The meeting would be held at the posh Sheraton Hotel located just on the outskirts of downtown Dar (as Dar es Salaam is fondly called by its inhabitants) and the Ministry accordingly extended invitations to various stakeholders, mainly the Donors and key Government Ministries.

Surprisingly, however, the Ministry unceremoniously cancelled the meeting at the very last minute. The Education Ministers (responsible for primary/secondary and post-secondary education respectively) and their Permanent Secretaries who were slated to lead and chair the meeting were all out of town. There was general disappointment at this turn of events and some Donors were incensed at the casual attitude of the Ministry and its lack of consideration for the implications of cancelling the meeting without any prior warning or offering any credible reason for its cancellation.

The Donors had been busy preparing for this important meeting. By April 21, almost all of them had sent in their comments on the preliminary appraisal report to the EU, which compiled and tabled them for discussion at a Donors-only meeting on the eve of the big event. Some Donors had flown in representatives and consultants for the purpose of the April 28 meeting. Whether or not the Ministry was aware of this was not clear to me. Nonetheless, cancelling an important meeting in such a manner appeared disrespectful of Donors' time, particularly when it was seen as a disturbing habit of the

Government. You see, on several previous occasions, Donor representatives would arrive and take their seats at the Ministry's conference room and wait for the chairperson to arrive for the meeting. The chairperson was usually a top Government official in the person of the Permanent Secretary (the Tanzanian equivalent of a Canadian Deputy Minister, and a Party appointee) or the Commissioner of Education who is the technical head of the Ministry and a regular civil servant. After waiting for some 30 minutes or so, someone appeared to announce a cancellation of the meeting. The chairperson could not make it after all. He was tied up with something else. Too busy on this occasion and there was no substitute chairperson who could take his place and conduct the meeting in a knowledgeable, meaningful and decisive fashion. So, the Donors with disappointment written all over their faces, and for whom no explanation was good enough to justify the no-show, would gather their papers and slowly file out and retreat to their respective offices to await an announcement by the Ministry of a rescheduled date for the cancelled meeting. On other occasions, the Ministry would call meetings at which the documents to be discussed were distributed at the meeting. Of course, such meetings had to be postponed to allow everyone on the Donors' side to study them and consult their head offices if that was deemed necessary. The April 28 cancellation was the big one, the big no-show that provided the proverbial last straw that broke the patience of the Donor representatives.

The Donors decided to hold a replacement meeting at the EU offices to discuss the cancellation of the meeting and what their response should be. This seemed to me as an extraordinary reaction and I was somewhat taken aback by this apparent righteous indignation. I had wondered: so the Ministry cancelled an important meeting. Maybe

they were really not fully prepared and therefore not in a position to engage the Donors in any meaningful and productive discussion. The out-of-country visitors get to spend extra time in Dar waiting. So what? Of course the Donors were counting their fee and per diem costs for consultants who would sit around doing nothing. Which is the greater cost – an unprepared Ministry which results in an unproductive meeting or the extra cost of having the consultants wait around or return at a more convenient date? I reminded myself that the consultants might have blocked out that period for their visit and might not be available if the meeting were postponed, as the Ministry had then demanded. But what – *really* - were *we* going to do? – call the Ministry to *fully* account for its *disturbing* uncooperative behaviour, file a diplomatic note of protest, punish the Ministry somehow; just what could *we* do? I will return to the meeting momentarily.

The *usual suspects* were gathered at the EU for the meeting. Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Canada, The Netherlands, The UK, IrishAid, GTZ (German), EU, World Bank, Unicef, and JICA were represented. In this grouping, the balance of power rested with the EU member states, whose combined aid to Tanzania accounted for some 50% of all external aid to Tanzania. Ten out of the 14 visibly active Donors in Tanzania were EU members. One of them, the UK's DfID, has decentralized operations and could make decisions in the field without reference to its headquarters, a position many of the other Donors envied as they had to defer to their respective headquarters for confirmation and approval of decisions.

The EU had decided to embrace the SWAp approach and Tanzania was one of several pilot countries for trying it out. The concept of an education sector SWAp for Tanzania was very much an EU agendum. Tens of millions of dollars could accrue to the

Tanzanians for basic education programming if all were to go well with a SWAp arrangement but Tanzania, which had bought into the design without fully considering its implications, was in for some unexpected heavy pressure as they were beginning to find. Some of the Donors had had a long tradition of providing aid to Tanzania. Its earlier socialist orientation endeared it particularly to the Scandinavian countries. Sweden, for example, supported a "Folk Colleges" program that provided vocational training to youth for some 25 years before it gave up because the Government of Tanzania was not able to sustain it. As a consequence, even though there was a crying need for technical education and vocational training, none of the Donors would touch "techvoc." The Germans, however, provided a Chief Technical Adviser to the Vocational Education and Training Authority, a quasi-autonomous non-Governmental organization established in 1995 with a mandate to coordinate and implement Government policy. Its Board, made up of private training providers, unions and the Government, which was represented by the Ministries of Labour, Education and Culture, and Industry and Commerce. The lack of attention by the Donors to issues of techvoc in SWAp deliberations was a constant source of frustration for the German adviser who believed that "training is not in the minds of Ministry people" (in an interview I had with him on March 12, 1999). The Ministry people were of course fully aware of the Donors' lack of interest and where they needed to focus their efforts if they were to attract the Donors' support. It was in the basic education sub-sector even as the Donors were insisting on a sector-wide exercise. Canada was noted for its controversial wheat farm in Hanang Province. The Danes introduced the District-Based Support to Primary Education, which would form the core of an emerging SWAp arrangement but the Danes had announced in 1999 that they were

pulling out of education (upon completion of their scheduled support to the district-based program) and into agriculture as a result of a new headquarters-mandated policy change and orientation. For the Tanzanians, this introduced an element of unpredictability that points to the potential staying power of Donors in a designated sector, particularly by those who were then pushing the hardest for a SWAp arrangement.

While these Donors came together from time to time to discuss a common Donors approach in dealing with the Government, their representatives held private views that were counter to the approach that the Donors wished to adopt publicly. One representative did not think that the Government had any business coordinating aid and the Donors. They could not do it and the Donors should have the responsibility of doing the coordination. Another did not think that all these Donors meetings should prevent a particular Mission from dealing directly with the Government as it saw fit since they were there on a bilateral, i.e., government-to-government, basis. Yet another would participate in discussions as long as they lasted but reserved the right, as it intended, to continue funding discrete projects. It hoped, however, that such projects would be consistent with the overall strategy of an agreed upon SWAp set of activities. Some feared an agendum controlled by the EU and its members might render them invisible in a setting in which each donor country was trying to raise its profile or visibility in the country. It was against this background that the Donors assembled in the EU office to consider its response to the Government's unexpected cancellation of that April 28 meeting.

The meeting between the Government and the Donors was going to consider several issues arising out of the March 1999 appraisal of the Education Sector

Development Program. With its cancellation, the "Gang of Four" (as the designated appraisal team leaders, mandated to follow up with the Government on the appraisal results, were called - in good faith and humour, I must add) showed up for about an hour to share with the Donors what had transpired in their own meetings with the Ministry of Education and Culture. Believing that there was lack of political will on the part of Government to move decisively on the unfolding sector development arrangement, a suggestion had been floated by the senior consultant leading the so-called Gang of Four to establish a presidential commission on the subject. Not everyone, including me, agreed with this suggestion. It would just add another layer of bureaucracy to an already confusing environment and in all likelihood stifle initiative. Besides, it was not feasible or desirable to have a presidential commission for each sector SWAp that came along. The Minister of Education saw as top priority the construction of classrooms and teachers' houses. The appraisers thought otherwise, placing a higher priority on other requirements such as the provision of educational material, which the Donors appeared to support. What we had was the Minister advancing his priorities to which he was entitled. The Donors, on the other hand, certainly were free to disagree with him. The difference of opinion was genuine. The challenge was whether or not this difference could be resolved satisfactorily, particularly in light of suggestions to set up technical working groups and introduce further reviews and studies. The process was already overwhelmed with a series of such reviews and studies. It was time to act and move on. These were all serious and important matters that the Government needed to consider very carefully before meeting the Donors to argue its case and hear the Donors' position. It did not feel that it was ready to do so effectively and opted to cancel the meeting at the very last

minute. Even though there were misgivings about whether or not the Government took the SWAp exercise seriously, some of us agreed with the need to give the Government the time it needed to reflect properly on the issues before it and how it intended or planned to deal with them. But then we had not invested as much as those who were incensed at the Government's appearance of dragging its corporate feet. And we had not flown in consultants who were going to return home without "deliverables" and claim their full contractual dues because they had cancelled all other engagements for the specific period in question. Perhaps even worse was the feeling that the Ministry was taking the Donors for granted and thinking that it could have the Donors at its beck and call.

It was not surprising that the Donors generally felt the way they did. They were in the driver's seat as Donors' support accounted for some 98% of the Government's development budget. With such a stake in the lifeline of a Government, the Donors *assumed* proprietary rights and acted as if the Government should step aside and let them run the show. Government delays were seen as incompetence or lack of commitment or both. For his part, the Minister of Education and Culture responsible for primary, secondary and teacher education did not seem particularly impressed with the antics of the Donors and his actions or the lack thereof were interpreted as the mark of an individual who did not quite understand and appreciate the foundation upon which he was standing. I had heard complaints from high-ups in the Ministry that some Donors had access to "the very top" and my fear was that sooner or later this particular Minister was going to be shuffled off to some other Ministry in an attempt by the President to appease the Donors. The Minister was still around when I left Tanzania at the end of

September 1999, so he must have had some clout with the very top – a source of added frustration for some of the Donors no doubt.

The replacement meeting ended up *voting* for what could only be described as a diplomatic reprimand. A letter would be sent to the Ministry to let it know how disruptive and unhelpful cancelling meetings – the April 28 one in particular - without any prior warning or reasonable cause could be to the efficient running of the education sector development program process, hoping it would not happen again. It was an extraordinary event but then s/he who pays the piper calls the tunes. In Tanzania's administrative configurations, it was elemental Tanzanianism at play.

The Donors moved very swiftly. On the same day that the big meeting was cancelled, and following the replacement meeting at the EU, a draft letter addressed to the Minister of Education and copied to key Ministries, including Finance, the Prime Minister's Office and the Planning Commission, and all the Donors was prepared jointly by the resident heads of three of the key donor players in Tanzania. They reminded the Government of their mutual agreement to meet on April 28 and the Government's own subsequent invitation to the Donors to attend the general meeting. The Government attention was also drawn to the fact that some of the Donors had indeed flown in their representatives from abroad specifically to attend the meeting. They then noted with customary diplomatic regret that the meeting was cancelled without any due advance warning, without any reasons, and without a new date for the meeting being set. They wondered about the Government's commitment in taking the next steps required in the education SWAp process. The angry tone of this letter was *buttressed* by a threat: the Donors were serious about the meeting and attached, for the Government's consideration

and response, a joint statement outlining the urgent action that they felt was required of the Government if it were to attract any further support from the Donors for the sector. The letter then went on to demand that the Government inform, with due notice, the Donors of a new date for the meeting and to provide its response to the appraisal itself in advance of the meeting to allow for a meaningful dialogue. Finally, they indicated the need for a continuous high level dialogue between the Government and Donors, signalling their preference not to deal with lower level officials on this appraisal report. It was a tense period and as one colleague put it, "things are getting quite delicate."

Critical Reflections on the Big No-Show Episode

Setting and Circumstance. The delicate relationship between the Donors and Government that was unfolding was centred on arrangements that were then afoot to independently appraise the education sector program that the Government had proposed. To attract donor funding, the Government needed donor buy-in to its plans. A first step in this direction was the proposal it advanced. Donors, while ready to invest resources (money, time, material, equipment, etc) in support of the sector program, wanted to see the Government demonstrate stronger leadership and commitment to the sector program development process. It must be understood however that the multitude of studies and analyses that went into the Government proposal was made possible by Donor funding and most of them were undertaken by external consultants hired and accountable to the Donors. The problem with this kind of an arrangement is the difficulty in appropriately designating ownership of the process at particular junctures in the relationship. Donor concerns about leadership and commitment seem like *conditions* to be met by Government and point generally at the lack of Government ownership of the agenda and

process. The concerns also implied a certain lack of confidence and trust in Government leadership, particularly the Minister responsible for education. The atmosphere in Dar was confusing. The respective roles and responsibilities of the partners were not defined. Communication between the parties was not always clear. Donors were only interested in supporting basic education but insisted on sector-wide planning and had almost assumed proprietary rights for the sector planning, leaving the Government in a constantly responsive and reactive stance. The concept of SWAps was new to the Government and it was struggling to adjust to its demands. It was an atmosphere that did not do much to enhance the prospects of the Government assuming ownership and it showed in the strained relationship between the parties.

It was interesting to observe that Donors did exercise as dominant a role as was evident in Tanzania during the period under review. They were clearly very much in control and were pushing an agendum that was moving too fast for the Government's comfort and ability to cope. A bit puzzling though was the rather passive nature of the Government. It did not seem to want to *antagonize* the Donors in any way, being so dependent on their support. Instead, it reacted by either not responding or ignoring Donor interests, such as the incidence of the cancelled meeting. All of this was borne out of a mutual distrust between the parties that did not make for a smooth working relationship. Compounding the problem was the inability of the Government to say no when the Donors were moving in directions that it did not approve of. On the Donors side, their inability to step back from time to time and take stock of the impact of their actions and demands on the Government simply had the effect of overwhelming a Government that was constantly striving, with limited capacity, to satisfy one Donor

demand or the other. I found all of this instructive as it was disturbing but what could I do insofar as my own position was concerned?

Self as Agency. As A. G. Hopkins writes in his *New York Times* article on "Lessons of 'civilizing missions' are mostly unlearned" (Hopkins, March 23, 2003, Section 4, p. 5), "When disillusion set[s] in, the recipients were blamed, but never the plan." One's own behaviour could be a great source of leverage, the kind of leverage that has been defined as reflexivity. As Dierkes, Antal, Child, and Nonaka (2001, p. 409) put it, quoting Rothman (1997), "When pointing a finger at an opponent, we might stop ourselves, count to 10, notice the three fingers pointing back at ourselves and ask first: why do I care so much? Then what have I done to contribute to this situation? And finally, what might I do to contribute to its creative resolution?" They went on to suggest that this kind of leverage means embarking on a journey of self-discovery such that I could for example discover my own causal responsibility – those elements of my thinking, perception, tactics, strategy, and objectives that contribute, even if partially, to an undesired outcome. Once this realization is made, I could then leverage these various points that are under my control to effect positive change. The changed conditions occasioned by this leveraging exercise could then influence the behaviour of others. It was an approach that appealed to me and one that I tried as much as possible to adopt in order to generate the trust I needed to function smoothly at the personal level in my working relationships during my tour of duty.

However, it was not easy to operationalize it at the *community* level. One's own behaviour, in the collective sense, is about the behaviour of the donor community as a group. As such, it was important not only to be self-assessing and critical as an

individual and to leverage the resulting benefit to influence a particular course of action but to do so as a collective, or on behalf of the collective, as well. The collective part was the most difficult part to embrace. For example, I could have been strongly vocal at meetings and rejected or opposed decisions that were inimical to good partnership with the Government but I did not. The internal cultural dynamics of the donor community, to the extent that one existed, worked against such overt behaviour. Generally, *renegades* who are perceived to have *gone native* and do not seem to know on which side of the partnership fence they belonged to tend not to be taken very seriously. Often they are ostracized, informally. They are *inadvertently* omitted from lists of invitees to meetings or parties. Documents in circulation manage not to reach them. Colleagues become too busy to meet with them to discuss official business or to do lunch. The renegades become *untouchables* and such avoidance tactics effectively isolate them. Those who are unfortunate enough to find themselves in these situations cannot effectively represent the interests of their government in the field. The tendency, therefore, is self-censorship and for members of the community to exhibit good *citizenry* by being good team players. Thus, in effect, they accept the collective wisdom of the donor community by not taking positions that might rock the [Donor] boat or embarrass the community. This was a serious dilemma for me and I was not able to overcome it completely. Instead, I sought ways in which I could help the Government within my limited mandate, such as encouraging senior officials to give more consideration to the plight of the poorest Region in the country, Lindi (discussed in the next section) and bringing the Regional Education Officer for Lindi to Dar to meet donor representatives at a party I organized with this agendum in mind.

The predicament of Ownership and Trust

> The truth of the matter is that, whatever the rhetoric, donors frequently have little intention of granting 'ownership' to local decision-makers unless these decision-makers have, on their own, come up with policies with which the donors agree. Indeed, I have heard an official of one donor agency say that ownership means that 'recipients do that which we want but do so voluntarily." (G. K. Helleiner, quoted by Hately & Malhotra,1997. p. 3).

The dynamics at work in this episode betrayed the ownership and trust that was needed to strengthen the working relationship between the Donors and Government. The Donors most interested in a SWAp experiment were eager to get started and show that they were making progress. Disbursement profiles had been mapped out in advance and frustrations set in when the Government was not responding fast enough. As one key Donor representative said to me, "here we are with [$125 million] ready to put on the table and they are dragging their feet!" Such investments could not be made without a successful sector plan, which the key donors were pushing hard to bring about. For the Government, the potential to raise the funds it needed for at least one of the education sub-sectors was tantalizing but it lacked ownership and control of the process. With Donors already responsible for some 98% of the Government's development budget, the Government could hardly claim or contest ownership. Donors were driving the agenda, deciding on how they would prefer resources to be allocated, and how the sector program ought to be designed and implemented. It was not apparent that this was a shared and negotiated relationship. Donor patronage was very much the dominant vein that ran through the relationship.

Donors may take pride in their ability to access the very top echelons of the political system to influence policy or action but many senior bureaucrats saw this as unnecessary interference in the internal affairs of their country. This did not make for a happy cooperative atmosphere. *Our* culturally-laden obsession with efficiency in our production-oriented undertakings is not one that is universally shared. The issue here is one of behaviour conditioned by culture. For one group – Government officials who are accustomed to all manner of shortages in supplies, equipment and faulty basic infrastructure – time is not an important factor in their lives, private or professional. They tend to be laid back and unperturbed by the exigencies of mother time. They are masters over time, not the other way around. For them, in their circumstances, a meeting is held when it can be held, not according to some fixed and deterministic timeline. What *we* sometimes fail to recognize is that if countries like Tanzania had it all and were efficient and effective in what they did, we would not be around pushing one form of development assistance or the order. They would not need *us*. African governments, by and large, view donors not just as sources of funding but as guests, in a cultural sense. As guests, a certain protocol of behaviour is expected. Guests do not tell their hosts how to run their households, even if they are supporting them financially, let alone take over, which is how many senior officials saw their relationship with the Donors.

Trust was a casualty in this story. The *diplomatic* note that was sent to the education Minister, and written out of deep frustration, did not do much to engender a trusting relationship. The note was copied to key Ministries such as Finance, the Prime Minister's Office and the Planning Commission, intended, by interpretation, to let the *world* know how badly the Ministry of Education and Culture had behaved; an approach

(from discussions with Ministry officials) that did not sit well with the education Minister and his senior officials. Withdrawal of funding was threatened if the Ministry did not smarten up and the note signalled that the Donors did not intend to deal with lower level officials. The Donors were indirectly calling for the Minister's direct intervention as a necessary indication of the Government's commitment. Many lower level officials however, who were responsible for making the system work, perceived this as snobbish arrogance and it affected the way they dealt with Donor representatives. This approach to a partnership is not a relationship enhancer but, perhaps, this was inevitable given the great power imbalance between the parties.

Unless due cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity is exercised, an inevitable conflict will arise with Donors mistakenly equating the local lack of respect for mother time as incompetence or lack of commitment and leadership. To suggest in an official letter that the Ministers and their Permanent Secretaries left town on the day that a special meeting was scheduled to be held was done "without any reasons" and then threaten withdrawal of support if the Government did not behave better in future could only have been taken as a profound insult by a donor community perceived to be arrogant and insensitive. Setting a date for meeting and then arriving for the meeting only to find that the official who had agreed to meet with you had gone on safari (journey or field trip in Kiswahili) or was away attending a workshop was something that happened to me on a number of occasions. Workshops may attract sitting fees or attendance allowances and for an official whose basic take-home pay was poor, this was an opportunity to augment his or her meagre earnings. Deaths from HIV/AIDS related illnesses were not uncommon. The need to attend a funeral in or out of town at very short notice did on

occasion take precedence over a scheduled meeting; local colleagues, given the stigma associated with the disease, were reluctant to provide specific reasons for their decision. As disappointed as I might have been at a last minute cancellation of a meeting I had prepared for and looked forward to, my meeting could wait. More often than not, I was able to arrange for a new date. In others, I never managed to make an arrangement for an alternative date and that was only because I was not persistent in pursuing it or had obtained the information I needed from elsewhere. For *us* in the donor community, our concept of time could be suffocating. It rules our lives and is inextricably linked to efficiency in ways that are inconsistent with the realities that many developing country officials face and experience in their daily lives. Although not often expressed, local officials do appreciate it when their donor colleagues exhibit some understanding of local *constraints.*

I never did find out why the Ministers and their Permanent Secretaries left town on that April day nor did I expect them to account to the Donors for their whereabouts. Sometimes it is wise not to even ask! The response of the Minister to the letter from the resident heads of mission representing the Donors was defensive in its general tone. This was to be expected because when Government functionaries get *attacked*, they do what they do best: go on the defensive. I came off with the impression that the Government and the Donors were not speaking the same language, so to speak, and recall suggesting that the Donors not react to the reaction of the Minister to the Donors' reaction to the big no-show. The meeting was eventually rescheduled and held in June 1999, a clear indication to me that the Government probably did not feel it was adequately prepared for the April meeting and had to abort it. Unfortunately, it did not come clean on why it had

to cancel the meeting. I do not believe however that this was a deliberate slighting of the Donors. It was the action of a Government that was not at ease with its *partners*, the Donors. Such a state of affairs is hardly conducive to open, mutually unrestrictive, and facilitative communication.

"Conflicting" Priorities. Tensions and conflicts do occur in partnerships. This is natural. The trick is in how they get resolved. In a Donor-Government relationship, when tensions arise over key priorities for example, Donors, even though they exercise overwhelming power in the relationship, must learn to give some ground and defer to the Government on priority issues that are dear to it if local ownership, however defined, is to be sustained. A classic case was the situation in which the Minister of Education wanted the construction of classrooms and teachers' houses to be given top priority while the appraisers of the ESDP, supported by Donors, placed higher priority on the provision of educational material and supplies. In a safari I undertook prior to the appraisal of the ESDP (discussed later in this chapter), I examined the needs at the local level.

On school facilities and the evidence in support of the Minister: many classrooms I saw were in need of rehabilitation. In other settings, new ones needed to be built. A 1998 directive from the Ministry in Dar directed schools to take responsibility for building required classrooms, desks, chairs, tables, cupboards, latrines and teachers' houses. Cement blocks and corrugated iron sheets were the preferred material for classroom buildings and houses for teachers. These were expensive and parents were not contributing fast enough to meet the challenge. A 3-bedroom house cost about 4 million shillings (4M/- at approximately 500/- to the Canadian dollar) to construct and a classroom, 2.3 million shillings. There was a wide gap between what was required and

what was available. In one District, 597 classrooms were needed but only 139 were available. Six hundred and forty (640) teachers' houses were required but only 35 were available. Teachers sounded quite demoralized when they talked about their working and living conditions. Adequate latrine facilities and availability of water on school premises were needed to enhance in particular the retention of girl-children in school.

On learning and teaching material and the evidence in support of the Donors: Teachers and pupils alike were badly in need of teaching and learning material. In many of the schools that I visited, there wasn't a single thing on the walls. Not even a map of Tanzania. Science kits and mathematical sets were generally not available. Textbooks were available in the ratio of one textbook to every 15 pupils. There were schools that were slightly better off but the problem of textbook availability was a universal one. Photocopying sections of a textbook for use in class was not a viable option as the schools lacked paper and photocopiers, and teachers seemed overly concerned about not violating copyright laws even when the textbooks were published by the Tanzanian Institute of Education. The Institute, on the other hand, would argue the case for cost recovery.

Some mitigating circumstances: The Southern Zone was hard hit by the drought, so much so that many children came to school hungry. Some returned home at lunch break in hopes of finding some food but never returned to class. Absenteeism was high and the ability of the children who were in school to concentrate on their studies was affected. Some teachers attributed the low performance of pupils to effects of the drought. However, in good times, the pupils' record of achievement had not fared any better.

Now, it is arguable who was right about which set of needs deserved to be accorded a higher priority. However, when lack of accommodation for teachers makes it difficult to recruit and retain teachers, equipping the schools concerned with school material and supplies as a matter of greater priority is unlikely to be of much help. Both sets of needs obviously go hand in hand but if a choice had to be made in favour of one set of needs for lack of sufficient funds, I should think that creating an environment that makes it possible to attract teachers and deploy them to schools would be given first priority consideration. In any case, it was humiliating for the Minister to have his cherished priority turned down but he was powerless to stand his ground. Such humiliation does very little to inspire a Minister to greater heights of cooperative behaviour. It does not give the Minister and his government ownership of decision-making when his patrons can veto his considered wishes. This type of patronage is sometimes mistaken for a partnership.

Story II - Grassroots Encounters in the Field

The month of March 1999 was an eventful one insofar as the ESDP process in Tanzania, or rather Dar es Salaam, was concerned. Dar was alive and bustling with related activities. Donors and the Government were gearing up for the ESDP appraisal that had been planned to be held the weekend of March 13. Volumes of commissioned background papers on various aspects of the education sector were in circulation. At times it seemed all too high-pressured and overwhelming given the tight deadlines to prepare for meetings of one kind or the other. Even NGOs that were traditionally left out in the cold managed to gain some degree of access and held "sidebar" meetings of their

own to develop strategies in a bid to influence, no matter how small, the content, if not the direction, that education in Tanzania would take.

I had been away on a long, rough safari just after the rainy season but when the roads were still treacherous, to the hinterland of the Southern Zone of the country to see firsthand what the reality on the ground was like. For education administration purposes, Tanzania is divided into seven Zones. Each Zone is made up of normally a cluster of three Regions. The Southern Zone is comprised of the Mtwara, Lindi and Ruvuma Regions, with its Zonal headquarters located in Mtwara (Mtwara is the capital of Mtwara Region à la New York, New York). As Zonal capital, Mtwara has a small airport, which makes it conveniently accessible. These Regions were considered to be the poorest in the country, with Lindi and Mtwara being the most disadvantaged. Lindi was the poorest of the poor. With a limited economic base, a very poor learning environment, great distances and very bad roads, socio-economic conditions in this Zone were very harsh. It did not seem to attract much interest in terms of investments and support, either from the Centre or from Donors generally. Finnish Aid (FINNIDA), the United Kingdom's DfID, IrishAid and the World Bank were the only Donors that had any presence in the Zone, mainly in Mtwara. Others seemed to be shying away from support to basic education in the Zone. Lindi had the worrying distinction of being a Donor-free zone and many local officials were at a loss to understand why the poorest Region in the country was being ignored with such an exclamation mark. In each Region, I met various officials and people at the Regional, District, and School levels: in the Regions, Regional Administrative Secretaries and Education Officers and a Teachers' Service Commission Secretary; in the Districts, District Commissioners, Administrative Secretaries, Executive

Directors, Education Officers, Statistics and Logistics Officers, Academic Officers and Education Officers; in Schools, headteachers, teachers, senior pupils and school committee members; and at the Zonal level, the Zonal Inspector of Schools.

In one remote location in Lindi, the officials there, not used to being paid a visit by District officials, let alone anyone from far away Dar, were so surprised that I actually showed up that the local telephone operator insisted on talking with me just to reassure herself that the rumour of a *live* visitor to the location was indeed true. I, for one, was amazed at how fast the proverbial bush telegraph had announced my presence in the neighbourhood. "Welcome, you are very brave," said the voice at the other end of the phone. "No one comes here to see us; we are so far away in the 'bush.'" The roads into the hinterland are impassable during the rainy season and could be very muddy in some places soon after, with the occasional bridge still damaged or washed away. My small 2-door 4-wheel drive Suzuki Vitara, with a bright red maple leaf sticker measuring a little less than 3 inches by 2 inches in size, neatly placed at the bottom far right-hand corner of the back windshield, was perfect for the roads. And with jerry cans filled up with extra gas, my mobility consultant as I called my driver, Zack, and I were prepared to take on the roads. With the exception of a couple of times when we got stuck in deep mud on isolated stretches of unpaved, laterite roads and the highly maneouvreable 4X4 seemed to be refusing to cooperate, we did just fine. Our bodies however did take a fair amount of beating from the sorry state of the roads. I was beginning to understand why Donors' presence in these regions ranged from minimal to non-existent. I returned to Dar on the night of March 7 to begin my own preparations and ready myself for the upcoming appraisal. And Zack was glad to be back in town with his young family.

The trip was a sobering experience. Nothing I saw on the ground resembled much of anything that was happening in Dar and what was about to shake up the education policy and programming environment in Dar. There was great talk at the Centre, for example, of decentralization. With the local government reforms that were being processed, implementation of education provision would be devolved to the Ministry responsible for local government, MoRALG. But no one was quite certain about the details of the local government reform process and how it was going to work or what impact it would have on the administration of education at the District, Ward or school levels. Educational achievement in all three Regions was low. Very low. There were schools in which for three consecutive years running, not one pupil in the final year of primary schooling passed the Standard (i.e., Grade) 7 exit examinations. The poor performance of pupils was blamed on poor teaching; 65% of the teaching force in Lindi, for instance, was unqualified. A more disheartening problem in Lindi was the unavailability of teachers, qualified or not. It was not a rarity to find a school that had only three teachers for the entire school with a full range of Standards 1-to-7 classes.

Schools were normally scheduled for inspection by District School Inspectors once every year. That, in itself, was not sufficient to be of any great help to teachers but resources were either very scarce or simply non-existent. Consequently, some rural schools had not been inspected, not even once, in the three to four years preceding my visit. Teachers were thus left without much professional guidance and help. In principle, each District should have a full roster of inspectors (up to 8). In practice, however, some Districts, such as Masasi in Mtwara Region, had only two inspectors. One of them was due to retire that summer. It was unlikely that he was replaced. That effectively left the

coverage of an entire District in the hands of one inspector who had no means of transport. In schools, class sizes ranged from 45 to 120 pupils per teacher depending on the location. To make matters worse, some parents did not value education and as such did not take an active interest in their children's formal schooling. It was difficult to fault these parents as one school committee member pointed out. Those parents who were hard pressed to meet their daily family needs were unlikely to be impressed by a system in which pupils who were in school were no better off than those who stayed at home. Poor wages apart, a combination of several factors, some mentioned above, conspired to thoroughly demoralize the teachers.

Something that I found particularly troubling pertained to the issues of access and equity. Many 7-year-olds, regardless of gender, were being denied access to school as a matter of Government policy! Albeit unwittingly I must hasten to add. Because there were so many older children who were out of school, Government policy was to start intakes into Standard 1 from a cohort of say, 13-year-olds and then work their way down the list until the classes were filled up. This system of selection effectively shut out the younger children if they were unlucky enough to be in an area with a large number of these older out-of-school children. It was close to moving one step forward and taking two backwards. The practice particularly handicapped girls who, if they did not start school early enough, ran the risk of their parents marrying them off before they reached Standard 3 or 4. Generally, some 58% of all children in Standard 1 are more than 7 years old. Gender disparity was not a big problem in the Zone as there was parity at some levels while more girls were enrolled at other levels. Sixty percent of all pupils made it to Standard 7 but it was mostly girls who dropped out of school. There is so much pride,

culturally, in a married girl that by the time a girl reaches Standard 4, she is ready for marriage. Their schooling tends to be regarded by parents as a waste of time and money, which was hard to come by for many. These parents could not see the value of such a limited education. Again, unwittingly, Government seemed to have made it easier for such parents to feel this way by providing a curriculum that was not relevant to the needs of the girls. Boys who dropped out did not fare any better. Twenty-eight percent of all street hawkers in the urban areas of the country were said to come from two Districts in Mtwara Region alone. Overall, for every child in school, two others were not in school. For 19 villages in the Ruangwa District of Lindi without any schools, the statistic of out-of-school children, needless to say, was 100%. This, for me, was a strong, contending reality and a key reason why people like me were in Tanzania.

The preoccupation of the Donors and the Government at the time would leave you with the impression that you were in a different country as there was such a great disconnect between what was exercising the great minds in Dar and the reality on the ground that was begging for attention. Dar was consumed by a higher level debate, often not *publicly*, on issues such as basket funding, funds fungibility or accountability as it was politely called, a myriad of reforms and their interconnectedness or lack thereof, project versus program approaches, who should or should not coordinate aid in the country, corruption, and so on. To the credit of some appraisers of the ESDP, they had asked, as part of the appraisal exercise, to be taken to typical schools well outside of Dar (say a 2-hour drive) so that they could see and get a feel for what the essence of the problem or problems in education provision really were in Tanzania but tightness of the appraisal agenda and logistics did not quite allow for this to happen.

On March 9, as part of the scheduled events leading up to the appraisal, *the trusted outsider*, who was head of a group monitoring the aid relationship between the Donors and the Government of Tanzania since the mid-1990s, was slated to debrief a joint session of Donors and Government officials, including the odd NGO representative who attended, in the conference room of the Ministry of Education and Culture. I will return to the trusted outsider's debriefing in the next section (see A Trusted Outsider Encounters the Players).

As I prepared and looked forward to the upcoming appraisal, I was preoccupied with determining quickly what specifically CIDA could do and, in doing so, how to ensure that there was a buy-in by various stakeholders, including very importantly the Government of Tanzania. After having had the privilege of meeting with teachers, headteachers and parents during my safari, I had come to the realization that unless ownership of the development process was a reality grounded in the Periphery, any talk of SWAp(s) and its constitutive concept of ownership taking root in the country was wishful thinking and meaningless. To start with, I had my doubts that a SWAp was really necessary in the first place. What did Tanzania do before SWAp was invented and demanded by the Donors? Of course, it engaged in multi-year development planning as it had done since independence. What was wrong with that planning process? If the planning regime was weak and inadequate, why not help develop an internal capacity to strengthen it? Why introduce a concept that only serves to burden the system and add to its confusion. Next would be the World Bank's Comprehensive Development Framework, which had barely been tested before the Bank started pushing another concept, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. I came to the uneasy conclusion that all

of these *innovations* were subtle power plays and simply Structural Adjustment Programs disguised in SWAp wrappings. The Structural Adjustment Program was an economic medicine that was too bitter to swallow and it was costing lives as the poor rioted in some jurisdictions as their lot got worse under the severe economic belt-tightening that Adjustment arrangements introduced. Its conditionalities were becoming increasingly difficult to sell in the face of popular disenchantment with these externally-imposed measures meant to stabilize the economy and spur a free market-induced growth. SWAps, with all the talk about partnerships and host national ownership, seemed more palatable and might be more readily acceptable by poor, aid-dependent countries like Tanzania. Interestingly, many of the rural teachers I met had never heard about the Education Sector Development Program. I cannot remember the last time any donor agency tried these innovative *gimmicks* with say China or India, countries that continue to receive development assistance from the West but are powerful enough to deal with the Donors on terms that respect their mutuality of interest.

However, the SWAp process in Tanzania was a given and underway whether I agreed with it or not. Now my venture into the Periphery revealed more basic needs that required a focus on quality in education provision. Parents' value of education was generally low given the lack of qualified and highly motivated teachers, proper facilities, equipment, material and supplies and, more importantly, the fact that many graduates of the school system were barely literate and numerate. In the new dispensation for education provision, communities were to take over responsibility for their schools but as the following story would indicate, the proposition was highly problematic.

In one school committee meeting that was in session when I arrived, teachers and parents were discussing, among other things, community *ownership* of the school. The Government at the Centre had issued a directive that henceforth, communities were to take charge and become more proactive in the management of *community schools.* Incidentally, primary education in Tanzania was universal and free. School committee meetings were typically held in the staff room of the school, this one in a mud-walled school, with chairs arranged in rows as in a traditional classroom set up. The headteacher, committee chair and I sat facing the group. Soft drinks and snacks were served.

One elderly woman at this meeting raised her hands and asked somewhat sarcastically if it was true that Government wanted them to run the schools. How could that be, she wondered, when they were not responsible for hiring and firing teachers, school inspectors hardly came around to visit and help the teachers, their kids were being sent home for lack of school uniforms and so on. Even if they were to agree to assume responsibility for the school, there was no guarantee that they (parents) could effectively do so because (political) Party members dominated the school committee. This was a Government trick, she concluded, to get more money from parents without doing anything in return and in a situation that, technically speaking, did not warrant any fees from parents.

I was *dying* to intervene but as a guest I thought I would not speak until I was asked. That was the polite thing to do. My chance did come as one of the curious parents wanted to hear what the *stranger* had to say. Now what do I do? Would disagreeing be seen as offensive? What if I simply agreed with the elderly woman? How

well would that go down with those who seemed to disagree with what I thought were very good points? Maybe I was being too sensitive. Finally, I summoned up the nerve to provide a *non answer* and ask the headteacher a question. "Where I come from" I said, "being poor doesn't mean that you are stupid. It is important that poor people not be taken for granted. I think there's a lot of merit in what has been said." There were a few nods and smiles but, by and large, the body language around the room was non-committal. Then I asked the headteacher why it was necessary to send a child home and thereby miss classes because s/he was lacking a school uniform. I was informed that "when the children come to school in uniforms, they perform better." I must have worn a puzzled look on my face because he looked at me and said, "I'm serious, and it is true." I thought quietly to myself: "when I get back to CIDA, I'd buy myself a good suit; perhaps that would help my job performance." I smiled at the headteacher and said I thought the correlation between school uniform and class performance was an interesting one that I needed to think about. When I got back to my base in Dar, I started reading Ken Saro-Wiwa's *Lemona's Tale* (1996) and came upon this excerpt:

> I liked it at school, playing with my friends and learning to read and write. . . . In the beginning, my mother could not afford a uniform, and she spoke to the teacher to allow me to go in my home cloths until she could provide me with a uniform. He agreed but it made me feel different from all the other children, and I did not like it. I cried every day after school, and badgered my mother until, miraculously, the school uniform arrived. I used it throughout the week and mother would wash it over the weekend and get it ready again for the next week. (p. 11).

Lemona was a first-grader. Her mother was single. Her tale is not an uncommon one in many cities in Sub-Saharan Africa. In one school catchment area in Kilimanjaro Region that I visited, 85% of households, with an average of 5 children per household, were said to be headed by women. These women were either divorced, singles or had absentee husbands (out in search of jobs in the cities). There are children from difficult backgrounds, such as Lemona's, for whom *school is cool*; they are eager to learn, do enjoy learning, and would rather be in school than out of it. They generally have supportive mothers who would strive earnestly to send them to school. These mothers value education for the difference that it could make in the future personal lives of their children.

Tanzanian households regard a *good* school as one that secures for Standard VII leavers (primary school graduates) a place in a Government secondary school. The most important criteria, by far, that parents use to assess primary school quality is access to a Government secondary school (Therkildsen, 1998, pp. 14-15). Therkildsen (p. 9) indicates that District Councils, whose members are directly elected at the Ward level, are very active in secondary school matters but reactive rather than proactive in matters dealing with primary education. The reality at the Periphery was thus quite different from the prevailing one at the Centre. The school committee discussed above had not heard about the ESDP that was such a hot item at the Centre but the headteacher had received a circular about it, which he was yet to read.

In another school committee meeting that I observed, one of the critical issues tabled for discussion was school levies that parents were required to pay. Government had felt that one way of promoting the new orthodoxy of demand-side financing was to

levy these charges. It seemed troubling as it wreaked havoc on rural communities and marginalized some children in the process. Government had issued a directive and that was it. While the concept of cost-sharing was desirable and reasonable levels of cost-sharing ought to be encouraged, the system of cost-sharing introduced by Government had serious inherent contradictions when considered within the context of the proposition that all children have a fundamental right to basic education. At this particular meeting, the headteacher was worried that most parents had not paid up and, as a result, it was unlikely that the powers that be at the District head office would look upon them kindly. Although this had been Government policy for some time, some parents argued against it, suggesting that the village folks did not have that kind of money to spare or waste.

Considerations of decentralized governance, participation and ownership, along with the usual World Bank and IMF pressures to *privatize*, had led Government to embrace demand-side financing of the country's public schooling system. Parents were required to contribute up to five thousand shillings (5,000/-), which is about Cdn$10, for a variety of school activities. One fee that was uniform across the board throughout the country was a 2,000/- Universal Primary Education fee per child per year. "Pretty minimum" was how one Regional Education Officer put it, and the Minister, in responding to a question on the subject during the June post-appraisal general meeting at the Sheraton Hotel in Dar, likened it to the "equivalent of asking for one chicken" from each household (for each child), implying that anyone could easily afford it. But was it? I was told at one District Education Office that 38% of all parents managed to pay the UPE fee, others either did not have the money or did not see the point in supporting a failing system.

I thought I'd take a closer look at this levy to see if an *average* family could really afford it. I looked at what it might cost parents to equip pupils with just exercise books and nothing else. The average annual per capita income in most areas of the Zone ranged from 10,000/- to 60,000/-. The average number of children per couple or family ranged from 5 to 7 and they tended to be close in age. Conceivably, therefore, as many as five children could be in school at the same time. Now, this is what the school system would have looked like to our average family when it sat down to consider whether or not schooling was affordable:

Cost of 1 exercise book	100/-
No. of exercise books required for the school year, for math alone	42
Total cost of exercise books for math	4,200/-
Total number of subjects offered in school (let's take 8)	8-13
Assuming exercise book usage for non-math subjects is half the usage for math (i.e., 2,100 x7)	14,700/-
Total cost of exercise books needed per child (4200 + 14700)	18,900/-
Ditto for all five children (18900 x 5)	94,500/-
Add the flat rate UPE fee of 2,000/- per child x5	10,000/-

As this calculation illustrates, exercise books alone are a killer and would throw the average family into deficit spending, if not outright bankruptcy. All things being considered, it was not surprising that parents did elect to have their children stay at home rather than go to school. Or, if their children went to school, why they would refuse or be reluctant to pay the UPE levy.

Critical Reflections on the Grassroots Encounters

What is the moral behind these stories and what do they illuminate? Three things can be discerned. First, they raise important issues that can "make or break" partnerships. Secondly, as actor-observer-narrator, they touch upon me and my*self* in a reflexive way. Thirdly, they suggest a cardinal principle or code by which development cooperation practitioners ought to conduct themselves and their official affairs if the relationships they seek to strike with their hosts were to make any meaningful sense at all. That code deals with respect and comes in the form of an imperative: Respect? Don't demand it. Earn it! Respect comes in a variety of forms in the relationships between Donor and Government and between central governments and local governments and so on down the line. Respect for *local rights* is one important set of rights – the right, for example, in the local ownership of the development agenda and process, i.e., the ability of local actors to decide on and implement their own development vision and strategies regardless of their consistency with those of external aid agencies. *Local* may be with respect to national, regional and district governments as well as administration at the ward and community levels.

In countries like Tanzania experiencing complex and difficult economic reforms, the local leadership often faces risks to their political survival, especially if programs or projects are deemed as low priority because of their minimal political payoff. Donor-Government interests may not coincide in such situations and ownership becomes a tricky phenomenon (Pavignani & Hauck, 2002, p. 22). *Trusting* by local actors in such settings is often related to their ability to count on external partners to understand and

appreciate their *condition* and respect their preferences. When this does not happen, mutual frustrations set in leading to low levels of trust between the partners.

In the sub-sections that follow below, I offer critical reflections on (a) the partnership potential that was never harnessed (*The Great Disconnect*); (b) how the cement that gives a lasting, concrete glue to Donor-Government relationships was so diluted and deprived of its essential properties that the very concept of *holding* anything together was betrayed, if not *rubbished*, in very practical terms (*Betraying Ownership and Trust*); and (c) romantic heroism, symbolism and *self* deconstruction (a reflexive turn in *Deconstructing Self as Hero and Expert*).

The Great Disconnect. The partnership that the Donors and Government seemed to have embraced in Dar was a narrow and simplistic one. It was predicated upon the mistaken assumption that Donor dealings with a line Ministry at the Centre, and the effects of such dealings, were sufficient to bring about an effective relationship in the overall scheme of things. It is clear that there was a great disconnect between what the Periphery was preoccupied with and what was exercising the interests of the Donors and Government at the Centre. They were two different worlds and there did not appear to be any attempt to directly reconcile the two either by Government or the Donors working in concert with the Government.

The fact that members at the first school committee meeting that I attended knew nothing about the ESDP and the headteacher himself was barely in the loop on ESDP happenings held serious implications for the country's ownership of the ESDP process and the national partnerships that would be necessary for a successful implementation of the program. Ownership does not just reside with a national government, which may

claim political legitimacy in a representative democracy. Ideally, for practical purposes, ownership involves various stakeholders at different levels of government and civil society. Their active participation would have promoted not only local commitment or ownership but enhanced the prospects of a stronger partnership arrangement between local actors and the Donors. With the local Government reforms that were being undertaken concurrently with other reforms in the country, Districts were slated to become responsible for implementing primary education provision, with Dar restricting itself to policy formulation and finance matters. District officials were no better informed about the happenings at the Centre. Their information came in the form of one or two-page directives from Dar on what Dar wanted the Districts to do. It was a very authoritarian top-down organizational system. District officials were afraid to voice opinions that might be contrary to the prevailing positions taken by the Centre, which:

> even at the level of intention [opt] for policies that enjoy donor favour, so as to keep the aid tap wide open. Officials are thus twice restrained in their (often voiced) willingness to own their national development – both by the resources that donors make available, but only according to their own priorities, and by the inadequate domestic technical and managerial capacity, which makes genuinely indigenous priority setting difficult. (Pavignani & Hauck, 2002, p. 22).

Lack of local knowledge and active involvement in the process led to misgivings and lack of confidence or trust at the Periphery in much of what was taking place in Dar. As one District Education Officer put it,

> Unless I'm ready to quit my job, no one here can criticize the plans that they are developing over there. I think they are just being pushed

> around by the donors to do this and that. Ask people here, down to the village councils, no one is interested in primary education. All they talk about is provision for secondary schools so that their children will have somewhere to go beyond Standard 7. But this is not what the donors want and our government is accepting this. Now, we have to deal with the people. It is unfortunate.

Sadly, there was no provision for local considerations and input on the matters at hand concerning the ESDP. Neither were there consultations at the various local levels involving the Regions, Districts and Wards. A great opportunity for developing partnerships and networks of partnerships from the ground up was missed.

With the Periphery effectively isolated and not actively engaged in the unfolding drama surrounding the ESDP at the Centre, it was difficult to see how its eventual implementation would move on an effective and timely basis. Interestingly, Donors who were insisting on local ownership had made no provision to engage and involve the Periphery. In some places, the ESDP was dismissed as a Donor imposition. This lack of trust and confidence in centrally-generated policy that was not fully appreciated at the Periphery was likely to pose stumbling blocks to effective program implementation and rattle the *global* partnership at the Centre.

It would seem that Jomtien's Education For All was the driving force behind Donors embracing support for basic education. The ESDP with its very narrow focus on primary education to the exclusion of the other sub-sectors was clearly not what Tanzanians wanted. If they had gone into Tanzania with an open mind and investigated the needs of the people rather than simply dealing with the Centre, they would have

discovered that at the local levels ownership is a function of what the *consumers* are willing to *pay* for. It showed a certain lack of patience by the Donors not investing the time and money needed to consult widely before *forcing* the Program on a somewhat reluctant and helpless Government. Partnership at Centre without corresponding linkages in the Periphery is fraught with the risk that the issues at hand may not be well internalized or understood locally, which might undermine the effectiveness of program delivery and not least the strength of the partnership at the Centre.

One lesson that I learned from my February-March safari was the enormous respect that it generated among local officials and their counterparts in Dar. They appreciated the fact that I had taken the trouble to go deeply into the hinterland and experienced some of the country's rural life, occasionally sleeping in *hotels* for as little as $5 per night – even though it was clear that I had advantages over local colleagues who might have wished to travel but did not have a vehicle available to do so or if they had one, did not have the gas to fuel it. Some were aghast at the thought that I had made the trip, meandering my way south from Dar on the very rough road along the coast. They wondered why I had not flown to Mtwara to be met by Zack as any other *reasonable* person would have done, to spare myself some of the pain of travelling on those roads. Having experienced the terrain, not only on this occasion as told in the background to the stories narrated above but on several other safari instances to other Zones, it was easy to be empathetic and see things from the standpoint of the District capital-based inspectors even though the non-performance of their duties was causing grievous havoc on the school system. This may seem like self-congratulatory aggrandizement but the point to be made here is that locals have a really healthy confidence in outsiders who interact with

them out of a deep understanding and appreciation of their local conditions. It also helps in their acceptance of solutions to particular problems that the outsider might propose or wish to table for discussion. It generates trust and allows for articulation of local ownership.

Respect in these circumstances does generate a good degree of trust, based on an acknowledgement by local colleagues of my being in the know, in practical terms. This helped a great deal in opening doors and allowing me to enjoy the confidence of colleagues in Government and the Donor and NGO communities. When, for example, one District Education Officer complained to me that a particular school was too remotely located that no one could reach it to equip it with supplies, he was pleasantly surprised to learn that I had been to this remote school. His office did not have *transport* to allow for any trips. I had a beer in the village in question and asked the Officer how the villagers got their beer and soft drinks supplies and why couldn't he just follow the beer trail. He thought I was *funny* but we both understood what he meant.

Development, by and large, is about alleviating poverty in recipient countries. If there was a need to do anything about poverty in Tanzania, Lindi was the place to do it; but the programming silence in Lindi, the poorest Region in Tanzania, was as deafening as it was instructive. Was this a question of Donors valuing their comfort and convenience of operation more than having to *struggle* in a Region without much demonstrable *absorptive capacity* and infrastructure? As we will see in the *Trusted Outsider*, the next story, it is probably all about personal comfort and convenience!

NGOs tend to go where the money is and their absence in Lindi was a function of Donor absence in the Region or lack of interest generally. As I began talking about Lindi

in meetings, some NGOs indicated they would be prepared to work in Lindi if CIDA would provide adequate funding. But Lindi needed more than one *small* donor for things to really take off. It was a tough sell but I encouraged CIDA nonetheless to consider Lindi as its principal area of focus for any programming intervention in education. Centre-level partnerships are useful in addressing *the big picture* but partnerships needed to function at lower levels of government – in the regions and districts - must be struck at those levels in order to be effective.

Betraying Ownership and Trust. The elderly woman at the school committee meeting who expressed some apprehension about her community's role and responsibility in managing schools, as directed from the Centre, point to missed opportunities. The possibility of community ownership of process, in terms of active participation, and of the program in question, would have been greater if there was confidence and, by implication, trust in the system. Ownership is not simply something that the Centre agrees to in its attempt to impress Donors and attract funding. It must genuinely involve people believing they (can) own it, whatever the "it" turns out to be (school construction and management for example). Without providing the enabling environment for such feelings of ownership to take root by engendering partnerships particularly at the Ward and District levels, people felt alienated from the system and manipulated by it. Reform plans in Dar, heavily supported by Donors, called for devolution of powers to the Districts in the administration of education provision throughout the country yet these Districts hardly knew what was going on in Dar in any detail that would make sense to even the casual observer. This is not the stuff of which

partnership with its underlying principles of ownership and trust or anything of that sort is made.

More disturbing was the seeming outright rejection of the people's own priorities. Partnership is about an acknowledged distribution of roles and responsibilities in pursuit of common objectives and mutual benefit. It was clear that at the local level, people seemed more interested in supporting secondary education. Their locally-elected officials were particularly proactive in this area and were rather lukewarm in their response to matters dealing with primary education, which was where the Centre was concentrating all of its attention in order to secure donor funding. This concentration was driven not by local priorities but by an international convention by way of Education For All, to which the Donors were subscribed to the exclusion of other sub-sectors. Even officials in Dar privately expressed concerns about the lopsidedness of the focus on primary education but they felt helpless in the face of a relentless, aggressive flogging and floating of the idea of primary education provision by the Donors. The World Bank was pushing it (World Bank, 1995). So were the OECD Development Assistance Committee and Unicef. The Millennium Development Goals[13] carved it into stone, so to speak. Thus, for Donors, the sub-sector of primary education was firmly locked in regardless of the wishes of their host governments and the realities on the ground. For this reason, when I was with the Southern Africa Division of CIDA as its education advisor, it took some repeated cajoling, rationalization and defence to get Management to

[13] These goals, now commonly accepted as a framework for measuring development progress, arose from agreements and resolutions adopted at world conferences organized by the United Nations in the 1990s. Otlined in a September 2000 UN Millennium Declaration, the goals deal with the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, the achievement of universal primary education, the promotion of gender equality, the reduction of child mortality and improvement of maternal health, combatting HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability and the development of a global partnership for development.

accept secondary school programming in Malawi. You see, SWAp had not arrived in Malawi. So, there, I got lucky; but in Dar, as much as I wished CIDA would do the unconventional and move partially into other sub-sectors, I was stuck in what were my terms of reference. My contact in CIDA did not want to hear about anything but primary education programming. Disregarding and disrespecting local priorities and needs as the people themselves express them, and imposing an agenda that goes against this grain, does not enhance or engender ownership and trust. More fundamentally, there appears to be a signal contradiction between the new orthodoxy of demand-side financing and private sector orientation on the one hand, and the blind focus on primary education on the other. Why? Because too much reliance on primary school graduates without a corresponding critical mass of secondary school graduates, does very little to attract foreign direct investment, for example. Secondary school graduates are more trainable than are primary school graduates with limited knowledge in the basic sciences and mathematics. Investors, in such circumstances, are likely to go somewhere else to invest their resources, leaving behind the Government afflicted and its Donor backers to continue their rhetorical talk about poverty alleviation.

At best, lack of consultation (and consideration) breeds misunderstanding. At worst, trust is the casualty as mistrust sets in heavily. You will recall the cost-sharing saga in the second school committee meeting and the "chicken fee" remark by an official who was not sufficiently sensitive to local conditions. Such a dismissive way of handling and responding to local circumstances does very little to elicit trust and ownership from those whose cooperation and buy-in are necessary to make a desired partnership work where it matters most. The chicken fee episode illustrates the kind of disconnect that

existed between the policymakers at the Centre and the *designated* program owners and implementers at the Periphery.

Deconstructing Self as Hero and Expert. Decking my official car with a maple leaf sticker is a habit of mine that dates back to my CUSO days in Nigeria in the 1970s. It was not done simply to distinguish the ownership of the cars. In a somewhat self-absorbing way, it was a symbolic advertisement of the tremendous goodwill that Canada, as a country, enjoys abroad and one from which I hoped, somehow, to benefit. The maple leaf sticker for me was a form of visa, a self-evident and dynamic visa that introduced me wherever I went without my uttering a single word. It opened doors, figuratively speaking. In Nigeria, as I drove by in neighbourhoods, kids would often yell out "Red Cross," mistaking the little red maple leaf for the Red Cross sign. The Red Cross did excellent work and was well known in Nigeria, so it did not really matter; I was in good company. In Ghana, such a sticker actually saved the life of a CUSO volunteer. Injured in a motor accident and lying by the roadside unattended to as vehicle after vehicle drove by without stopping, the volunteer thought his number was up and that he was going to die. A Ghanaian did finally stop and took the volunteer in his car to the nearest hospital, miles away from the scene of the accident, where the volunteer received treatment. When he recovered enough to engage the stranger in conversation, he wanted to know why he stopped when others did not. The stranger said that he recognized the maple leaf right away and assumed that the volunteer must be a Canadian, possibly a CUSO volunteer. The Good Samaritan had been taught by a CUSO volunteer when he was in high school. His CUSO teacher always carried a backpack with the Canadian flag prominently displayed on it.

Over time in these places, such as the hinterland in which I travelled in Tanzania, people do forget names of people and of cars, but remember symbols. I was there and gone in what must have seemed to them as a flash but the image of Canada, albeit in a small way, represented by the maple leaf sticker, remained. I hope. And those who would argue that development assistance is all about showing the flag and nothing to do with development really may have a point, just a point up to a point.

Daring to do what many colleagues in the donor community would normally not do by travelling not only on the rough, difficult roads to the Southern Zone but to the hinterland of its regions conjure up a romantic heroism that may seem bafflingly self-promoting, casting shadows of the good versus the bad in development cooperation practitioners. Why did I do it? What did I hope to achieve? Was I being naïve in assuming that undertaking such a trip would prove anything? I believe in doing the right thing and walking the walk as the saying goes. Helping the poorest of the poor is a Donor mantra. The Southern Zone was the poorest in the country and I wanted to find out in the most realistic way possible what local conditions were and why not very much in the way of Donor activity was happening in the Zone. I understood the constraints that local officials faced and the difficulties that communities had to wrestle with. Development, however, is not all about external assistance. The ability to internally generate and sustain development efforts is crucial in effectively harnessing external help. This seemed to be the drawback in Lindi; its entrepreneurial spirit was perhaps not strong enough to impress hard-nosed donors who had an eye on the sustainability of their efforts in any particular region. I, on the other hand, was perhaps too optimistic in my optics on the Zone in terms of the opportunities that I saw for development work but I

must say that I was impressed by the determination of those school committees working almost in total isolation as they did.

Development cooperation practitioners tend to assume that "certain people and societies are less developed than others, and that those who are more developed, i.e., more modern, have the expertise/knowledge to help the less developed (or developing) achieve modernity" (Parpart, 1995, p. 221). For Parpart, the idea of the expert is driven by and anchored in Enlightenment thought (p. 222). Seasoned practitioners however who take the time to reflect on what they do and how they go about doing what they do recognize the need to be cautious about their assumptions and the judgements and decisions that flow from those assumptions. As experts, we enter situations in the field armed with the certainties in the ideas that we bring along with us. There is no doubt that we have important, sometimes vital, roles to play in shaping the decisions that affect what gets done in development assistance but it is equally important to leave sufficient room for some other unorthodox knowledge and expertise with which we may be unfamiliar, no matter how *underdeveloped* the context. We must also leave some room for our ignorance in order to permit us to learn and engage in meaningful cooperative behaviour and endeavours. The Lemona tale is instructive in this regard.

At first, it may seem ridiculous that a school system would insist on school uniforms and deny access to children who could not afford them. On reflection, the headteacher's statement at the first school committee meeting that children learn better when they come to school in uniforms may not be as far-fetched as it may seem when one considers Lemona's state of mind, her feeling different and worrying herself silly about it. It is possible that such a state of being in a child, if allowed to continue for too

long, may indeed affect the quality of the child's learning and performance, not to mention the child's self-esteem. In development interaction, the capacity to keep an open mind, listen and reflect on what may at first glance appear untenable, even nonsensical, are important in understanding the depths and meanings of local contexts.

Story III - A Trusted Outsider Encounters the Players

Still nursing my *battered* body from the February-March safari, I arrived at the Ministry of Education and Culture complex in Dar on March 9 for the debriefing by the trusted outsider. Many important complexes in Dar have a front gate and a no-nonsense gatekeeper through whom you must pass, show your I.D. and sign a visitor's book before you enter the building - that is, if you know where you are going. If you haven't a clue where you are headed, you could spend the next 30 minutes or so wandering around asking for directions. By this date, I had already made several visits to the Ministry and was now a familiar face to the front entrance gatekeeper and several inside gatekeepers (i.e., secretaries).

The conference room where the trusted outsider would make his presentation was located on the top floor of the Ministry building. Once inside the small foyer on the ground floor and just as you are about to turn around at the straight-ahead end of the foyer to begin your climb upstairs on the concrete steps, in front were a row of offices marked SDP-1, SDP-2 and so on. These were (Education) Sector Development Program offices commandeered for use as secretariat for the ESDP, which operated in parallel to the Ministry. Some of the best officers that the Ministry had to offer were siphoned off to this secretariat and the overlapping of functions that this parallel operation caused, along with the salary top-up that those local staff privileged to work at the unit enjoyed,

not only caused some resentment between the Ministry's regular staff and the *salary top-uppers*, it undermined the internalization and ownership of the venture. The SDP secretariat officers enjoyed the gadgets that a modern office provides: cell phones, land phones, fax machines, photocopiers, computers and e-mail accounts, printers, scanners, steel filing cabinets and other assorted office supplies that were not readily available to regular Ministry staff. The Secretariat was primarily accountable to the funding Donor(s). Somewhat unwittingly, a class structure had been imposed on the Ministry, with the Secretariat folks obviously in superior position.

At the end of the stairs on the top floor, visitors veered left on a corridor to head straight into the conference room, passing a row of offices to the right with secretaries and copy-typists clickety-clacking away on their computers and ancient mechanical typewriters. A core group of donor representatives and Ministry officials (that is to say the regular faces at these Donor-Government meetings) and the trusted outsider filed in on time almost simultaneously and proceeded to take their seats around the oblong conference room table. The table was so long it required a booming voice or microphone for individuals sitting at opposite ends of it to hear each other clearly. On this occasion, a microphone was not supplied, not a good omen for the soft-spoken types. As it often happened in these meetings, the Donors were clustered around each other on one side of the table. The Ministry big wigs took their customary seats at the head of the table and the other officials took their places on the other side of the table. The trusted outsider must have been familiar with these arrangements over the years that he had been visiting the Ministry; he positioned himself naturally about the middle of the table across from the table facing the donor representatives. As a *coopérant* advisor, I usually sat next to

wherever the official CIDA representative chose to sit. On this day, we sat next to each other just a few seats down from the chairperson at the head of the table, to his left. This way we could consult back and forth if necessary and it would not be a strain to hear the chairperson when he spoke or to catch his attention quickly. The overall arrangement looked too much like a we-versus-them atmosphere but it was a protocol that all accepted without fuss or second thoughts.

Pleasantries and side chit-chats buzzed up the room as tea and biscuits were served until the chairperson called everyone to order and proceeded to introduce the trusted outsider who had been following the Government of Tanzania-Donors aid relationship for the past four years or so and requested we do a *tour de table*, each person present introducing him/herself. Some business cards were exchanged to round off the introductions.

The trusted outsider began his presentation by stating why he was in the country. He had been asked by Tanzania's Treasury, on behalf of the Consultative Group, to revisit the issue of aid coordination, a timely topic as we approached the date for the ESDP appraisal. He was to examine and provide a report on the degree to which the protocol surrounding aid coordination had been respected. (The Consultative Group is made up of Donors/lenders and the Government of Tanzania representatives who meet once a year, usually in Paris, to review the country's development assistance status). The trusted outsider was held in high esteem by both sides, particularly the Tanzanians who saw him as a special *representative*. He spoke eloquently in their defence highlighting positive achievements and downplaying the Government's shortcomings. He was clear however on two things: leadership on the part of the Government on the financial side of

things remained weak and the nature of partnership was not quite understood by the parties; their relationship, he thought, remained fragile. He knew the Government was unhappy about the parallel program administration in the form of the (E)SDP secretariat that one of the key Donors had set up but the Government pay policy in the making at the time, he believed, just might kill the practice of special project pay. Following a January 1997 meeting between Government and the Donors, the parties agreed to adopt 18 "first steps" to govern their partnership. These first steps ranged from the issues of leadership, transparency, aid coordination and capacity building to issues of parallel administration setups and their concomitant salary top-ups, ownership, harmonization of Donors' procedures and technical assistance. With the exception of the inability of the Donors to reduce the administrative burden on the Government in aid delivery, which received almost a failing grade, and the issues of ownership and the Consultative Group workings as at 1999, which he gave a failing grade, the parties were accorded a passing mark for their efforts at development cooperation. The trusted outsider addressed specifically the key issues of how well the Government of Tanzania had performed in terms of conceiving and executing development programs in close partnership with local stakeholders and external, i.e., Donors, partners; changing Donor attitudes and flexibility in aid delivery that were consistent with the partnership approach; improved aid coordination and integration of aid into Tanzania's development priorities; a greater transparency in aid delivery on the part of Donors and accountability for its use on the part of the Government. He also talked about the reduction of corruption practices; greater involvement of local stakeholders outside of the Government in development management; and overcoming other obstacles to good relationships between the Government and the Donors.

Key partnership principles with which I am concerned in this thesis are reflected in the issues that the trusted outsider raised in his presentation. Although his assessment generally *favoured* the Government, he was careful in his assessment to strike a level of neutrality that was disarming and non-confrontational. The discussion that followed his presentation was therefore not as robust or muscular as one might expect in a situation of mutual distrust that for me characterized the relationship between the parties. What made the encounter interesting wasn't so much what was said or the exchanges heard inside the conference room but the *corridor talk* that followed it after the meeting, in the days leading up to and after the appraisal.

What follows now is the trusted outsider's assessment of the issues that are immediately germane to this thesis. At the conclusion of my narrative summary of his presentation, I will reflect critically on the implications of his findings.

On Ownership

The fact that the Government had taken the lead in preparing a Policy Framework Paper (dealing with macroeconomic management), a task that involved the entire cabinet and the line Ministries, and successfully negotiated it with the IMF, was signal proof that the Government had made great strides since the trusted outsider issued his 1995 report on the prevailing aid relationship. Ownership of the development management process was not in doubt even though non-Governmental groups were not involved in it. The Government had worked well with the World Bank to access support for outside consultations. The Government had also done well on tackling a Public Expenditure Review process that was linked to a Medium Term Expenditure Framework, work that involved Government officials, Donors, academics and consulting firms. These positive

developments point in the direction of transference of leadership and ownership to the Government but it would appear that the Donors had not taken any notice. This was a source of disappointment for the trusted outsider who proceeded to highlight the major constraining nature of IMF judgements upon which bilateral Donors tend to make or base their decisions. The IMF as a monetary institution did not handle reforms of the kind that was taking place in Tanzania very well. The reforms, which involved lengthy consultations, were time consuming and required flexibility, two things that the IMF was not equipped to do. Inevitably, conflicts arose but this was attributed to personalities although the trusted outsider was careful to add that other factors might have been involved.

On the sectoral front, things were not as positive and clear. Although Government was seen as having taken the leadership in advancing the sector programs, these programs remained problematic due largely to a local Government reform that was designed to decentralize the delivery of basic services such as education to the Districts. Compounding the problem was the location of the Ministry of Regional Administration and Local Government (MoRALG) in Dodoma, the new administrative capital of the country. The Donors and other Ministries remained in Dar, the old capital, making consultations difficult. Nonetheless, many Donors lacked confidence in the capacity of Districts to take on the mandate of managing funds for local program implementation, largely because not many Donors had any history or experience of working with District authorities. This was bound to interfere with the eventual transference of ownership down to the District level. Their nervousness resulted in the appraisers of the Local Government Reform suggesting that the startup date of the program be delayed by six

months and, once launched, that it be phased in over a 3-to-5 year period in terms of the Districts actually assuming their designated responsibilities. The trusted outsider felt that MoRALG should be moved back to Dar if ownership by this Ministry of the process were to mean anything.

Finally, it was noted that outside of the Government, other stakeholders, such as NGOs, were not involved in the development management process. Part of the problem had to do with the fact that an agreement had not yet been fashioned out on the registration of NGOs, which were generally experiencing difficulty contributing their voices to the deliberations between the Government and Donors.

While reluctant or unwilling to challenge some of these findings in front of Government officials, some Donor representatives, in corridor talk, were not sure if the trusted outsider was assessing the aid relationship in Tanzania or in some other country. Some argued that the Government had a long way to go in handling the macroeconomic environment regardless of what it had negotiated with the IMF. Others contended that if they had not noticed all the positive developments that had been associated with the Government, it was because it had not yet happened! Corruption, some were quick to add, was an issue constraining Donors' trust and confidence in the local system in Dar, let alone down in the Districts. Government officials on the other hand felt they had received a fair assessment and were quite pleased with the trusted outsider's evaluation.

On Aid Coordination and Partnership

The trusted outsider noted that the Government and Donors met regularly over the sector-wide programs with a Government official acting as chairperson. This was facilitated by Government leadership and changing Donor attitudes. However, it was

premature to make a definite statement on how effective in practice these arrangements would be. He raised the decentralization issue again, the fact that the Ministry responsible for it, MoRALG , had a working arrangement that was not very productive. The MoRALG representative who regularly participated in the Government-Donors working group was located in Dar while his senior colleagues were based at the MoRALG headquarters in Dodoma. This did not make for effective decision-making at the working group meetings as the MoRALG representative lacked the authority of his Dodoma-based senior colleagues, a situation that held a great deal of potential for a waste of time and energy and for creating anxieties about the readiness and capability of MoRALG. It was noted however that despite such misgivings, Donors contributed to pooled funding resources in support of the reforms taking place. While the health sector SWAp appeared to be running well, the education sector one seemed to lack a sharp sense of direction.

The trusted outsider was concerned that the plan for the next Consultative Group meeting to be held in Paris and not in Dar, as was the last one, had the possibility of creating unnecessary friction between the Government and Donors. The Consultative Group meeting that was held in Dar in 1997 was deemed very successful. The President and his entire cabinet participated. Businesses, trade unions and NGOs had the opportunity to interact with Donors and the deliberations received wide press and media coverage. For cabinet ministers particularly, the meeting gave the participants a better understanding of their Government's relationship with the Donors, they were able to debate issues of concern to them and to respond in greater detail to Donors' queries. All of this bode well for the idea of local ownership of the development management process

that was so much at the centre of the concept of partnership. Besides, it saved the Government money, brought in tourist revenues, and represented a radical symbol in the changing aid relationship between Donors and Government.

Disappointingly however, the Donors had voted, albeit by a narrow margin, and despite very serious objections by the Government, to hold the next (1999) Consultative Group meeting in Paris instead of in Dar where it had registered such a success. The trusted outsider felt that these successes had either been forgotten or played down by the Donors. The main reason that Donors gave for preferring Paris had to do with the attendance of their headquarters-based senior officials. If the meeting were to be held again in Dar, they would not be able to guarantee the attendance of these officials but the trusted outsider observed that the Multilateral agencies and at least one bilateral donor would likely be represented in Paris by their Dar-based representatives. He was concerned about the negative symbolism that the decision, which effectively ignored the objection of the President of Tanzania and would force him to go to Paris, would engender a reluctance on the part of the Government to take the Donors seriously on such issues as ownership. The trusted outsider pleaded for future Consultative Group meetings to be held in Dar.

Again, participants at the debriefing listened politely without challenging or adding much to what they had just heard. For me, it was interesting that the Government did not seize upon this opportunity to raise its objections one more time to the Consultative Group meeting not being held in Dar but perhaps they knew it was by then a dead issue. The corridor talk was however lively and in one particular instance quite harsh. One Donor representative, obviously unimpressed, dismissed the talk about

holding Consultative Group meetings in Dar as "rubbish," disputing the claim that things were as positive as they had been painted by the highly respected outsider. A colleague disagreed suggesting that Dar was alive with excitement and purposefulness during the last Consultative Group meeting held in Dar even if generally the average Tanzanian hadn't a clue what was happening in the country in terms of the aid relationship between their Government and the Donor community. Debates of this kind were to occur from time to time during the month of March at dinners, reception parties, seminars, and casual meetings but in the end seemed futile as nothing really seemed to be changing in any significant way.

Critical Reflections on the Trusted Outsider

A Take on the Trusted Outsider's Observations. Despite the talk of how critical local ownership is to sustainable development and in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (OECD, 1996; Development Aassistance Committee, 1996), debate continues on whether *ownership* is happening in reality or just one of the current buzzwords in the vocabulary of development cooperation (Holmgren & Soludo, 2002; Foster, 2000; Schacter, 2000; Agneta & McNab, 1999; Boeren, 1999; Cassels, 1997).

Three issues clearly emerged from the trusted outsider's debriefing that have potential implications for Tanzania's aid relationship with the Donors: capacity of District authorities; the right venue for the Consultative Group meetings; and the location of MoRALG in Dodoma.

Donors have traditionally dealt with Governments at the Centre where the national or federal capital is located and have paid little or no attention to the modalities of a decentralized governance system, at least in terms of engaging it directly. With the

massive decentralization plan of the Government of Tanzania that was being put to effect under a Local Government Reform package encouraged and supported by the Donors, it dawned on the Donors that if capacity at the Centre was weak, it could potentially be a nightmare dealing with local Governments in the Periphery whose capacity was even weaker. The nervousness of the Donors is understandable. They have had little or no direct experience working with Governments at the District level and any direct involvement would be very labour intensive if their funding arrangements were to be properly *safeguarded.* A shortcoming of the plan to deliver services in the education sector under the emerging education sector development arrangement was that while it was generally acknowledged that the Districts would handle program implementation, the Districts were absent from the deliberations that were happening in Dar to shape up policy and planning. Having a good grasp of the debates surrounding a variety of sector issues would no doubt be useful in enhancing effective implementation of those policies and plans. Both the Government at the Centre and the Donors were counting on MoRALG to bring the process to the Districts but I do not think it had the capacity to do so from what I was able to discern from my safaris. The Districts seemed so far away and removed from Dodoma or Dar. In Ghana, similar concerns have led to CIDA's Ghana Bilateral Program embracing a DWAp (District-Wide Approach to Programming) concept instead of strictly a SWAp arrangement. This keeps them appropriately and relevantly engaged. It is a model that could serve Tanzania well and allay some of the fears that Donors had.

The vote by Donors in Tanzania to move the Consultative Group meeting to Paris rather than respect the Government's wish to continue holding it in Dar, and despite the

vigorous protestation of the President of the country, was quite puzzling. It was clear that there was no compelling reason for the pro-Paris vote particularly given Donors' concerns about involving a greater number of local stakeholders in the development management process and policy dialogue. The strong benefits that could accrue to Tanzania were overlooked for what appeared to be a convenience-driven decision. The decision seemed self-defeating but the same attitude that prompted some Donors to avoid the hard-to-reach places in the country with limited infrastructure seemed to be at play in this decision to make Paris the centre of attention. A decision of this kind is nothing but a cheap transparent power play that is obvious even to the casual observer and does not do much to promote the trust, ownership and partnership that is so vital for a successful aid relationship.

The heavy dependence of Tanzania on Donors' assistance probably accounts for its inability to move its key Ministries to Dodoma. Donors would not move. It is either not convenient or the facilities in Dodoma are not up to *acceptable standards*. Rather than do anything that might annoy the Donors, the Government has chosen to leave Dar as de facto capital for the purpose of effective liaison with the donor community. Nigeria had a similar experience when it built its new capital, Abuja. Diplomatic missions would not move up to Abuja, preferring to stay in Lagos, the old political and commercial capital of the country. Nigerian federal civil servants also found it quite convenient to remain in Lagos. When finally the Head of State moved his offices and residence up to Abuja and ordered Federal Ministries to follow suit, the diplomatic missions had no choice but to follow or incur the expense and inconvenience of commuting back and forth from Lagos. I doubt at this stage that Tanzania will be able to summon up the courage to

do the same but all it would take is for a few key diplomatic missions to agree to move and this would provide the fillip necessary for local businesses to begin to invest in Dodoma. Until that happens, Dodoma will continue to remain *unattractive* and the problems of an isolated MoRALG will continue to disrupt the effective workings of the relationship between Government and the Donors.

The Urge to Take Control. In their hurry to get programs off the ground and begin meeting their disbursement targets, Donors tend to fall into the temptation of making the decisions and doing the work that should rightly be the preserve of the recipient country, undermining or betraying the idea of local ownership in the process.

One of the main reasons for undertaking SWAps is to foster host national ownership of the development agenda and process. The rationale for this is that it puts the host country, through the leadership of its central Government, firmly in the proverbial driver's seat, in full control in setting priorities, making decisions and allocating resources. However, the "driver's seat" metaphor depends on whether the context is that of a chauffeur-driven or owner-driven vehicle. In the chauffeur-driven model of ownership, the driver is an after-thought. The driver has no say in decisions about what type of vehicle is bought, for what intended purpose, how it is to be used and its maintenance. The driver cannot decide when to drive the vehicle or where to drive it to unless on an errand. Such decisions are the prerogative of the boss or owner of the vehicle. At the end of the day, the vehicle stays with its rightful owner and the driver walks or takes a rickety bus home. In many instances, the driver is simply tolerated as his (or in rare cases, her) services are not really essential. You see, in environments experiencing grinding poverty, such as you will find in many Sub-Saharan African

countries, owner-drivers are regarded with quiet scorn and contempt for being too tight-fisted with their money in not being kind enough to engage a driver and thereby contribute, even if negligibly, to easing the national poverty index. So, out of shame or genuine need or *philanthropic* generosity, the *wazibenzies* (Kiswahili for jetsetters who drive around in elegant Mercedes Benzes) would hire a personal driver. For their respective *constituencies*, a uniformed driver confers a notch up on the social status scale for both driver and master. The metaphor may not hold much positive meaning for recipient governments.

The literature on ownership generally comes firmly down in favour of involving recipients in problem diagnosis and solution design if the likelihood of follow-through in implementation is to be assured; "This principle reinforces the importance of resisting the tendency to determine solutions in advance and of allowing those with a role in the policy implementation process to develop a situation-specific approach to what needs to be done" (Brinkerhoff, 1996, pp. 4 & 15). Does it matter that the Government of Tanzania was not consulted before Donors decided on the sector they would prefer to support?

It could be argued that once an international convention such as Education For All is embraced by a country, that country is obliged to follow through on its requirements. Tanzania was a star performer in this regard. Not only was Tanzania committed to universal and free primary education, it devoted close to a quarter of its national budget to the education sector. Within the education budget, a whopping 66% went to basic education, which includes adult education. Secondary education, in contrast, received only 7%; which represents the lowest rate of secondary education provision in the world. This rather meagre investment in the secondary education sub-sector is understandable

given the fact that Tanzania was virtually dependent on Donor funding for its development budget and Donors were interested in doing one thing – basic education. So, implicitly, the Government of Tanzania was in agreement with the priority of basic education that is the focus of Education For All and therefore did not need to be consulted further on its education priorities. One could argue, however, that these international conventions are sometimes signed *under duress* by recipient governments which know that not signing might mean losing out on potential Donor support to the sector. It is like the much hated structural adjustment program that recipients reluctantly accepted (Nicholls, 1999) and which undermined the prospects of promoting local ownership. As in SAP arrangements, Donors dictated the terms and conditions for their support to SWAp programs. The struggle or contention was between *global compacts,* such as Education For All, and local community priorities, such as the provision of secondary level education. The ever increasing population of primary school graduates (teenagers by now), with nowhere to go and nothing to do, was a constant worry of parents and the local education bureaucrats. Nevertheless, the Donors were unyielding in their commitment to primary schooling. It was all about taking charge and being in control – a position that did not help the local ownership that Donors crave so much.

Having decided, almost en masse (the German GTZ was just about the only agency in town with some involvement in the secondary school sub-sector, assisting with mathematics and science teaching) that basic education is what they would support, the Donors needed to ensure that a follow-through commitment by the Government of Tanzania was in place and that the Government would also take ownership for the intended outcomes of its collaboration with them. The Donors thus introduced SWAp in

developing and planning the sector. For the Ministry of Education & Culture, the idea of an Education Sector Development Program was said to have come as a giant wave that caught the Ministry quite unprepared. As a result, it was not in a position to consider the whole idea carefully; it had been stampeded into embracing the idea of a SWAp for the education sector before it knew what the implications of doing so would be. To many Donors, the Ministry appeared lost and lacking in understanding of what was happening. Government leadership was consequently not forthcoming in a way that was encouraging and reassuring to the Donors. This left the Donors assuming control and dominating the process.

When *ownership* was discussed in Donor cycles in Dar, much of the focus was on the central Government doing the owning. The Minister was supposed to be enthusiastic about how enthused the Donors were about giving support to the basic education sub-sector. My hunch was that the Minister, being politically astute and attuned to the needs of the people and the need for his Government to diversify the education expenditure portfolio, showed little interest in what the Donors were doing. This gave rise to the thinking and feeling that he was not education-oriented. The president *on down* needed to show some solid commitment and leadership and it was not happening fast enough to raise the comfort level of the Donors. The school committee story illustrates how superficial partnerships in a sector development setting could be if the quintessential stakeholders are excluded from problem diagnosis and solutions design.

Doing Coordination in the Field. Coordination at the field level is never an easy proposition. In discussions, everyone seems to agree that it is the right thing to do. Donors fuss about it; they all want to do it but somehow it never quite happens the way it

is talked about. The recipient government would like to be able to coordinate the inflow of aid but are frustrated by either lack of capacity or Donors' unwillingness to concede ground as key Donors nurse their respective policies, plans, frameworks, and/or strategies which may or may not be consistent with the plans of the recipient country. In Tanzania, the task was particularly difficult given the weak policy context, not to mention the lack of capacity at aid coordination. The net effect was an aid environment that was heavily driven by Donors. A report prepared by Barbara Fillip for the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (Fillip, 1998), quoting a World Resource Institute study, notes that:

> Theoretically, better coordination of Donors activities would advance sustainable development by minimizing waste of resources, by reducing project overlap and duplication, and by fostering more efficient and effective aid delivery. In fact, among many Donors and aid recipients these presumed advantages to coordination are matched, or superseded by the perceived advantages of not coordinating their activities. (p. 18).

Aid coordination in the field is undertaken for a variety of reasons: a) as noted in the immediate quote above, the need to avoid duplication and an overlap of activities; (b) promotion of coherence of Government/Donors policies, strategies, and plans; (c) promotion of complementarity and synergies aimed at an integrated (e.g., ESDPs) and harmonized (e.g., Donors' procedures) approach to programming or aid support; and (d) the identification and establishment of comparative advantages which allow for a rational division of labour among the development partners. Essentially, therefore, aid coordination is a consultative process in which one party tries to get a feel for others' perspectives and expectations or in which development partners seek to come to a

common agreement on policy, program objectives and priorities, and possibly areas for joint action at the operational level.

The ESDP efforts by Government/Donors in Dar were attempts at engendering a common agreement on how the partners should behave. There was some concern, not publicly expressed, that the exercise was tending toward multilateralism rather than the bilateralism that should govern Government-to-Government relations. This was always a sore point lurking in the background with the potential to undermine the unity of purpose of the bilateral Donors. An influential Donor representative (in a private discussion), disapproved of the Government assuming a coordinating role. The Government was too slow and things were unlikely to happen were the Government to be in the proverbial driver's seat. From this standpoint, while aid coordination was obviously a motherhood issue to which all enthusiastically subscribed, in reality not everyone really wanted to be coordinated!

One very important weakness in the Tanzanian system was the absence of an institutional framework or network for sharing information between Government and its constituent parts on the one hand and the NGO community on the other. At the urging of Donors, attempts were made at dialoguing between Government and NGOs. When I was in Dar, they had been at it for some four years and were nowhere near reaching an agreement of how they would relate to each other. Government was suspicious of NGOs, many of which Government officials jokingly referred to as "non-governmental individuals" (or briefcase NGOs as they are otherwise known in the Donor community; these are one-person NGOs). NGOs, for their part, were fearful and distrustful of Government, so the suspicion was mutual. What I found striking, in conversation with

some NGO representatives, was the claim that NGOs should not be subject to financial audit because they are private. These same NGOs were quite vocal in calling for transparency in Government transactions.

The fact that people at the local levels were not aware of the goings-on in Dar with respect to the ESDP was also a telling shortcoming of the system. Even in Dar, several stakeholder Ministries with a training mandate were not visible at the consultation table when the MoEC was in deliberation with the Donors. So the coordination game in town, to the extent that it was happening, was the one taking place between Government and Donors and among the Donors themselves.

Donors enjoy considerable advantages over a recipient government in the field. To invoke an old dictum, knowledge is power. The Donors are well organized in the field and have field staff that can travel and reach places that the Government is unable to reach because it lacks transportation or gas or both. Donors gather information that is usually not available to the Government. Consultants come in and out and some of their findings and reports do not get to be seen by the Government. Some of these reports are considered too sensitive to share with the Government, which may be too touchy about *criticisms* by foreigners. The Donors' intelligence base is a lot more robust than the Government was sometimes able to generate. The language. The jargon. The befuddling acronyms – the Donors have them all; they speak the same language. Besides, some Donors have access to the highest places in the political and bureaucratic system and are capable of manipulating the system to achieve their goals. Recipient government officials do not generally have access to frequent international meetings where development matters are discussed. They do not have access to the sort of information

Donor representatives have after conducting their exploratory visits, developing their sector strategies and implementation plans. By this time, the Donor representative is generally more informed about the recipient country than many of its civil servants. The recipient government may have diplomatic representation in a Donor country but I did not get the impression that officials really knew how CIDA or any other donor agency operated and what motivated their interests and interventions in Tanzania. These are the shadows that the power asymmetry between Donors and the recipient government cast on their day-to-day interactions in the field.

One presumed intended benefit of aid and donors coordination for the recipient country is the harmonization of policies and procedures. In reality, however, harmonization has tended to narrow the choices that the recipient government can make. International agreements on conventions such as the Millennium Development Goals and Education For All put the recipient government in a policy development straitjacket because with these conventions it is easier to obtain funding for basic education as opposed to higher education, for example. The danger that this attracts in a SWAp arrangement is perhaps a psychological one. Once committed to basket funding,[14] a Donor might feel that it is henceforth responsible for running the entire sector. NGOs and non-governmental institutions, such as universities, learn very quickly and tend to appropriate a *basic education* for their projects for the purpose of attracting Donor agency support. All of this simply works to generate unnecessary tensions, suspicions and distrust on the part of the collaborating partners.

[14] A concept used to denote the pooling of funds by donors in support of a program, using local official accounting and delivery mechanisms.

The How-and-What of the Stories Narrated

Placing the plot of the stories in space and time, the stories were constructed based on my own general context, situational lived experience, and knowledge of development cooperation. In telling the stories, in the tradition of interpretive and postmodern anthropology, I focused on selected events that I considered memorable and important in shedding light on the practical tensions and nuances in Donor-Government relationships. These events were thickly described in order to engage and bring the reader along in getting a good feel and appreciation for what was happening at the time.

My storytelling began with a juxtaposition of *life* in Dar as the Donors and Government were playing it out and the reality in the hinterland. This juxtaposition revealed a great disconnect between the reality on the ground in the Districts and the partnership modality that informed Donor-Government interests and attention in Dar. There were hardly any consultations between the Centre and the Periphery even though the former had issued a directive devolving responsibility for primary schools to local communities and expected parents to build schools, rehabilitate classrooms, construct teachers' houses, build latrines, and make or buy chairs, desks, etc for the schools – in a context in which primary education was free. This mandate came with no corresponding power to hire and fire teachers or to make locally-relevant policy. Donors talked a lot about poverty reduction as a central goal in development assistance but it was puzzling to observe that they had no presence in the poorest region of the country, Lindi.

Next, I described scenes from my safaris to locations in the Southern Zone of the country. Parents were eager participants in school committees but again had little power

to influence the course of events as political party representatives dominated the committees and could outvote the parents on matters of crucial importance. This did not make for much confidence in the school system and it showed in parents' reaction to directives from the Centre on issues related to school management and cost-sharing.

Close to the scheduled appraisal of the ESDP during the weekend of March 13, 1999, a Trusted Outsider had been invited to Dar to debrief a meeting of Donors and the Government on his status report on Donor-Government Partnership. His overall assessment was positive although there was an instance in which he gave the relationship a failing grade. One of his findings was the unfortunate humiliation of the President of Tanzania when, despite his pleas and wishes, Donors voted to have the annual Consultative Group meeting in Paris instead of in Dar which the Government felt, from its one experience of hosting the CG, had the distinct advantage of involving a larger number of local stakeholders.

Flagbearing in development cooperation, whether it comes in the form of bilateral agreements, poster-size identification of donor projects displayed on the sides of project vehicles, aid packages, or a small sticker stuck on the windshield of an *expert's* car, is about self-interest. Out in the field, many donors, regardless of their status as minor or major actors, desire to bring other donors into their preferred programming orbit. It is the doctrine of *leveraging* thy neighbour. When the ESDP was about to be appraised, there was what appeared to be a scramble, a *frantic* search for appraisers. In a *global* interagency meeting, donors were asked to recommend names (consultants) who could participate in one of six review teams (plus an overall coordination team to pull

everything together). The review teams consisted of: i) preliminary program review team; (ii) development program review team; (iii) operational program review team; (iv) strategic monitoring and evaluation review team; (v) institutional development and capacity building review team, and (vi) financial planning and management review team. Donors who advanced names would be responsible for the costs of involving their chosen consultants. The government was to engage in a parallel exercise so that the review teams would be made up of Tanzanian and expatriate experts. UNICEF, which was interested in adult education, girls' education and children in emergency situations, submitted a large number of names. Others submitted names in accordance with their main interests. While consulting with CIDA headquarters on possible names, I put in my name as a possible appraiser. It was clear that too much self-interest was about to drive what was happening on the donors' side. So a decision was made not to include any donor representatives in the field. I was deemed a donor representative and eliminated. However, I submitted two names – a colleague from CIDA who sat in on the operational program review team, and a consultant who headed the financial planning and management review team. Between the two of them, I thought Canada's two cents' worth would be heard and might influence the direction that the ESDP took. The lead consultant responsible for the entire exercise went logically to a DfID appointed consultant, who no doubt made sure that DfID's interests were not ignored. Government undertook a similar exercise and nominated local experts to work alongside the expatriate experts on the various review teams.

When you have some 55 consultants running about town in Dar, with the demands that they make on meagre Government resources, and Government is required

to produce 2,500 quarterly reports to different donors (Stern, 2000, p. 23), there is no local ownership, there is hardly any meaningful coordination taking place, and trust becomes an expensive commodity that is hard to come by. The themes selected for highlighting in this chapter work in interrelated ways to inform the workings of Donor-Government partnership in a sector development setting. Ministry officials reacted in a manner that suggested that they were spectators and bit actors in the externally-imposed SWAp drama in which they were engulfed. Donors acted and demanded things and the Government scurried around in desperate attempts to oblige them. Because Donors lacked full confidence in the capabilities of the Government, they arrogated to themselves the mandate of program articulation and development. This bypassing or marginalization of Government was not overt in nature nor even intentional. However, the heavily dependent Government was resentful of the foreigners who were toying around with its sovereignty. Such resentments make for an uneasy cooperative mindset, which did not engender the local ownership of the development agenda and process that all parties craved so much.

Underlying the manifest absence of any true sense of ownership was the low level of trust between Donor and Government. The political risk-taking that local Ministers factor into their policy choices are either not recognized or are ignored. Government suspicion of Donor intent may naturally arise, resulting in low cooperative behaviour on the part of Government. "When a project enters an area, it lands in a setting of competitive patronage networks. In order to survive and succeed, a project must establish liaisons with key actors in some of the most powerful local patronage networks" (Seppala, 2000, p. 158). Local politicians are keenly aware of the workings of these

patronage networks and may *challenge* projects or programs if their political ramifications are perceived to be high risk. In such a situation, claiming ownership of a risky endeavour is the last thing a local politician would wish to do. This may lead to tensions if the *problem* is not resolved in a way that makes the project or program less of a political risk.

Donor policies also have an uncanny way of reinforcing donor control. For example, some donors could not, as a matter of policy, contribute to the support of a recipient's regular budget, which would allow the recipient government a free hand in allocating the funds as it sees fit. Concern about accountability is at the heart of the matter. Corruption, endemic in some countries, may result in the fungibility of funds, which might create a problem for the donors' own accountability requirements. Recipients, for their part, charge that Donors do not trust them and such concerns are simply designs to keep control and retain power in their relationship.

The *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* is another example. It is the new *conditionality* that recipient governments must produce to demonstrate their commitment to tackling the abject nature of the poverty that is demoralizing and incapacitating their citizenry and thus attract donor funding. An accepted Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper comes with the blessing of the IMF and the World Bank, which confers *legitimacy* and therefore credit-worthiness on the client recipient country. It beckons the markets of the free world to take notice and venture forth into investment ventures in these tortured landscapes of human misery. They are open again for business. With a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper in place, Donors can now patronize the recipient country. Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers are supposed to allow for an *enhanced* coordination of

donor efforts. What happens in reality is the emergence of a convergence of agenda that speaks to the policy goals of the IMF, the World Bank and what is now becoming an increasingly controversial World Trade Organization. The social and institutional conditions that gave rise to the idea of a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper are complex but it has been suggested that it grew out of, most directly, ethnocentricity and neo-liberal development policy, which "has been declared a failure (although many would say it has been a resounding success for big business)" (Klees, 2001). That has not stopped donors from demanding a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper which only serves to further the breakdown in trust that might otherwise be nurtured to some agreeable level of mutual satisfaction and further push away the attainment of local ownership.

When we arrive in a country with *our* minds already made up as to what *we* want to do – after all it is *our* money as some of *us* would indignantly protest - we are not setting the stage for a partnership. Any talk of a *policy dialogue* in such circumstances is patronizing. *Coordination* that ensures that we remain in a privileged position vis-à-vis the recipient country does not enhance the prospects of ownership and trust. It simply maintains and consolidates the power inequality that makes for weak and unsustainable partnerships. For a true partnership to exist, the concepts of ownership and trust must work in tandem. The Tanzanian situation was an abject illustration of how not to partner as the Government withdrew into passive acceptance of donor offerings and the donors scrambled for power and influence. This is patronage, not partnership.

Reflexivity. The exigencies of my everyday life as a CIDA person are such that I have had very little time to reflect on what I do as a development cooperation practitioner and how I do it. This is more or less true of my colleagues who are so busy doing

development, a reflective pause would appear to be a luxury that many of them cannot afford. For the first time in my 22 years with CIDA, this study provided me with the opportunity to take a deliberate, sustained and critical look at myself and the donor community of which I am a member in the context of an old issue – the problematique of Donor-Government partnerships.

A troubling phenomenon revealed in the stories told above is the tragic inability of development cooperation practitioners like my *self*, as individuals still active in development working for official donor agencies, to shake off the donor community's *cultural* constraints that effectively prevent them from challenging behaviours that are not partnership-friendly. However, one lesson that I have drawn from this study is that while it is convenient to hide behind organizational rules and regulations that constrain one's ability to act in ways that promote more meaningful partnerships, it is not futile to adopt a proactive personal stance that facilitates positive change. It is the attitude and disposition of individuals that make for a good or bad partnership. Any work on improving partnerships must therefore begin with a focus on the aptitudes and attitudes of the individual practitioner as not everyone is suitable for development work. Rather than bemoan the shortcomings of donors, it is prudent to seek ways to engender a greater empowerment of local partners.

Moral of the stories. What meanings might be attached to these stories? If I were in teacher education, I might turn to the work of such researchers as Clandinin and Connelly and interpret these stories in the context of their work on personal and practical knowledge (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, pp. 24-32). I might equally draw on the well-established work of Donald Schön on *The reflective practitioner: How professionals*

think in action (1983). Schön's work cuts across a number of professional areas and highlights the ways in which reflexivity is an essential part of the practice of social workers, teachers, managers and so on. To the best of my knowledge, there is not the same rich body of literature on personal meaning and reflexivity that underlies the work of the donor and development world even though there is of course a layer of discourse that speaks of such terms as *partnerships, intercultural awareness,* and so on, and as noted earlier writers such as Crewe and Harrison in their book on *Whose Development?* do provide an entry point for considering the value of telling stories as an entry point to developing a more critical stance towards work in development, something, it could be argued, for there is always room.

Do I have a more critical stance towards the kind of work I do as a result of engaging in this kind of process? How likely is it that I would engage in this kind of work if I were not writing a dissertation? (discussed in the next chapter). Now that I have written these stories which come out of a year's fieldwork in which I worked closely with a variety of donors and officials within the Government of Tanzania, there are several themes that now jump out at me about my interest in development cooperation partnerships.

Consultative arrangements in-country. Because trust and local ownership of the development agenda and process is so central and key to a successful partnership, in situ consultations must go beyond meetings between donors and a recipient government and embrace consultations with a wide variety of stakeholders. What the *Grassroots Encounters* story reveals is that buy-in to a program is at least necessary as a starting point, if not sufficient, to engender a strong sense of ownership and trust. The lack of

consultation with local actors simply led to doubt, suspicion, mistrust and uncooperative behaviour. At the international level, Donors must remain sensitive to the need of their client-country to involve key local actors in the deliberations they hold. Such involvement would mean holding international meetings in the recipient country. Facilities are not that bad in many of these countries and there is no reason why meetings such as Consultative Group meetings could not held in-country. At least, they could alternate the venues if all parties need to be kept happy.

Partnership as a cross-cutting issue. Up until now, donors have talked a storm about partnership but have really not paid much attention to realizing it in practical terms. When *Gender Equality* and *Governance* became critical development imperatives to be addressed, they were *mandated* in donor program planning and implementation. Project proposals deal with these issues, not just conceptually but in how they will be fostered in planning and implementation. Gender and governance specialists are now commonly available in donor agencies. Recipient governments are setting up ministries of "women's affairs." *Mandating* has been a powerful incentive to act. Partnership needs to be seen and handled in this fashion for it to make any sense. Project evaluations deal with partnership, if at all, in a cursory way. This must change. Programs and projects will need to be specifically evaluated for their partnership effectiveness. Until this happens, there will be no incentive for anyone to take partnership seriously.

Suitability of donor representatives for field work. A donor representative in Cairo once complained to me that he was experiencing difficulty supporting his daughter at university yet "here we are giving scholarship to all *these people.*" I have never been so speechless! When we bellyache about poor Donor-Government partnership, it is

people that make these partnerships work or fail. The aptitudes, attitudes, and motivation of donor representatives are critical to the success of the relationship donors have with their host governments. There is a need for donors to exercise due care in the selection of those they post overseas, for partnership begins with them.

Developing them in our own image. Much of the expertise we offer developing countries is by and large based on our own experiences of what has worked in our own backyard and of course in other places where the ability to adapt and adopt has made positive results possible. What these stories have taught me is that we need to acknowledge our own ignorance as we approach a different culture in order to be able to meaningfully observe, listen, reflect, and act. Developing them in our own image may be modernistic but unless this modernity is culturally embedded, it could be a wasted effort, what some may call white-elephantism.

Potential of study to have theoretical significance. Finally, the work of Geertz and Clifford and others working within anthropology suggests that this kind of work can also have theoretical significance. Stories-in-context, for example, provide opportunities within organizations for the emic perspective, which permits insiders with the categories to tell or perform stories within their lived experience or context. A postmodern implication of this is the linkage between local stories and embedded socio-economic, political and cultural contexts. Different versions of a story can be told depending on who is telling it – staff, management, union or client. Some of these stories are aimed at informing, instructing, empowering or mobilizing while others can serve to oppress and marginalize particular groups. Another implication of the postmodern method

> is the need to trace how supposedly universal and ideological understandings are evoked rhetorically and resisted in the narrative moment in organization documents, speeches, and other texts. Postmodern ethnography, for example, is a cooperatively evolved text between researcher and insider that foregoes the tale of the past as error and denies the myth of the future as utopia (Tyler, 1986, quoted in Boje, 1998).

And as Boje went on to identify, the postmodern turn has several key method assumptions worth noting. They include humans as storytelling animals who

> act toward their organization and environment based upon their storied interpretations of self, other, organization and environment; story making is a collective process of social interaction in which story meanings change over time; story meaning changes with the context of the telling as storytellers select, transform and reform the meanings of stories in light of the context of the telling; the individual is part of the collective enterprise of constructing and transforming stories told to the world and stories of the environment being constructed; and the inquirer is a story-reader who, upon entering the storymaking world, changes the storymaking process by being there at all (Boje, 1998).

The usefulness of a Geertzian approach for the kind of work that I have done is the exploratory potential of his interpretive anthropology. In Geertz' (1983) essays on *Local Knowledge*, for example, we learn that anthropology per se is not a well-defined methodology. It is not an academic discipline either but it provides us with a starting point, which serves as the basis for exploring both human knowledge and self. The theoretical significance all of this underscores is the contention by Geertz that knowledge

is socially constructed by means of human discourse and that knowledge is intersubjective and dynamic rather than objective and static. For the development cooperation practitioner-researcher, it is a good basis for generating their *local* knowledge.

To conclude, I should add that I came to write the stories narrated in this chapter out of a deep concern that donors, no matter how much they talk about wanting to engage recipient governments in development cooperation partnership, are not interested in, nor are they really capable of, relating to aid recipients as equals and partners. Also of concern to me is the fact that people like me, working for donor agencies as officers or experts, befuddled by our crippling culture of paper shuffling, do often tend to hide behind the masks of officialdom, of rules and regulations, of policies and directives, of foreign policy objectives, of plans and strategies and as such constitute ourselves unwittingly as part of the problem. In a reflexive way, therefore, my own character, background and subjectivity not only shed light on my role in constructing the stories but served as both a producer and a product of the stories that I told.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Implications

Home bound: Introducing the chapter

Finally I was done. Mission accomplished. My time in Tanzania was up and I was on my way back home from the field for the *last* time. On that flight across the Atlantic, I had time to reflect on my stay in Tanzania. I had learned a great deal about Tanzania and its people and made some great friends, and of course had the opportunity to take in the majestic Serengeti and Ngorongoro but I could not help wondering if it had all been worthwhile. Would my work ever be of any help to Tanzania, then or in the near future or ever? Would *we* ever give *these countries* a chance to do *it* for themselves? After all, I rationalized, I met many Tanzanians who could handle the type of work that many expatriate *experts* like me do. Why is it that we did not consider them in the first place? Given the chance, I thought to myself, would the Government of Tanzania intuitively go for an indigenous expert or prefer a foreign one? Foreign experts have a way of *neutralizing* what otherwise would be internal tensions for one reason or the other. Now my cultural bias was beginning to throw up ready excuses. A Canadian perspective and an understanding of the Canadian context were necessary; local experts could not possibly have as good a grasp of the Canadian policy and programming landscape as would a Canadian expert sufficient to develop an appropriate strategy that would appeal to CIDA. Foreign experts may be convenient and safe but how can that be with all those consultants that were running about town overburdening the local bureaucracy with their demands for information? My mind wandered off in this maze of self-reflection until an inner self interrupted my thoughts with a friendly reassurance:

relax, you got a Tanzanian to replace you; what more do you think you could have reasonably done?

In this concluding chapter, I summarize the study and reflect on the implications that it has for development cooperation practitioners, including me, for donor agencies and recipient countries; and for further research. In telling the *Grassroots Encounters* story in the preceding chapter, the issue of partnership being more than just relationships between central governments and the donor community is raised. I point out that for ownership as a central force in sustainable partnerships to hold, other less powerful stakeholders at the Periphery of the core actors must be actively involved. Their buy-in is crucial in a system that was devolving primary education provision to the local levels of government. How might this multi-stakeholder partnership work? It is benefiting to end this thesis and this chapter with a modest provisional proposal for an enhanced partnership framework that addresses the question of how such partnerships might be structured and how they might effectively operate.

Summary and Conclusions of the Study

Since the release of *Partners in Development* in 1969, the notion of partnership has been, and continues to be, a central mantra in the discourse on international development cooperation. The OECD's Development Assistance Committee and the World Bank have rediscovered the concept and are now strong apostles and passionate advocates of its application in Donor-Government cooperative relationships. The problem, however, is that despite keen efforts at striking *Official Development Assistance partnerships*, sustainable partnerships have eluded the cooperators. The sector-wide approach is both a fund-raising mechanism and a mode by which donor agencies and

recipient countries work together in pursuit of goals and objectives for the sector, with funds being pooled together and managed through the Government's management system. Donors that choose not to participate directly in a sector-wide arrangement nonetheless support projects that are consistent with the programming framework of the sector-wide program.

Government-Donor partnerships are often organized, formally or informally, around a project or a program; in the case of this study, it is the development of a sector-wide program in education. These partnerships which require, among other things, the principles of ownership and trust to make them work effectively tend to be a mixture of three principal types – consultative, contributory and operational, depending on the entry point in the program cycle (see Chapter 2). Technically, the senior partner, the Government, is supposed to retain control and ownership but rarely does given the complex realities on the ground.

Partnership is much talked about by the donors especially, but donors tend to *micro-manage*, to take over and run the show, making nonsense of the notion of local ownership, of the host government being in the proverbial driver's seat. That this is so is evident in the data presented in *The Big No-Show Episode* story that I narrated in Chapter 4 and my critical reflections on it. For example, the fact that the Donors accounted for 98% of the Government's development budget meant that they not only had but exhibited an extraordinary interest in safeguarding that investment – by *assuming* proprietary rights and thus initiating ideas and activities that could have been better left to the Government to determine and advance. They were effectively in the driver's seat spearheading the agenda, making pronouncements on preferred resource allocation modalities, and on

program design and implementation. It was a classic patronage system at work as it was far from a shared and negotiated relationship.

A preference for being in charge of a given agendum is not something that donors publicly discuss or admit. However, some development cooperation practitioners do admit privately to such preferences even though, in public, they embrace, or at least do not oppose, the idea of local ownership, e.g., the donor agency representative who (in personal communication and narrated in Chapter 4) did not think that the Government ought to be coordinating the work or intended work of the donors and the associated or expected inflow of aid to the country. The representative suggested that the Government would not know where to begin, let alone effectively mastermind and run it. It is difficult to see how a poor developing country like Tanzania could claim ownership when they are so heavily dependent on the largesse of donors.

The Tanzanians are a gentle but proud people. The sense of commitment, and therefore ownership, that the Donors would like the country to have rings hollow in the ears of many Tanzanians. Their culture compels them to ask the question: how can you own something and have no meaningful and substantive control over it? Nominal ownership does not make sense to them. They tolerate donor talk of ownership which many see as well intentioned but patronizing. The example, from *The Trusted Outsider* story, of the Donors vetoing the preference of the Tanzanian President to hold a Consultative Group meeting in Dar instead of in Paris is an interesting case in point. The *marginalization* of the education Minister in determining priorities is another example that undercut the credibility, if not authority, of the Minister in the eyes of his own people, a move that did not endear him to the Donors.

A more practical approach to ownership in such a cross-cultural setting is for both partners to take ownership, i.e., joint ownership, until such a time that a donor or donors withdraw and hand over complete control to the recipient country - with donors agreeing to take full responsibility in accounting for the failure of any particular programming scheme that they may insist on implementing but which turns out to be unsustainable. The Teachers Resource Centre scheme that I refer to in the previous chapter is one such concept that is likely to pose problems once donor funds dry up. Local ability to sustain these centres would be critical. When I was there and visited one of the first of such centres, it was starved of resources – in personnel, equipment and material and its head wondered why new ones were being built when existing ones were experiencing such difficulties. Ownership must not just reside with the Centre. The Periphery and other local stakeholders need to buy in and seek ways of working together collaboratively for country, as opposed to Government, ownership to work effectively.

Trust is fundamental in the relationships that donor-donor and Donor-Government partners weave and nurture. It is the cement that glues partners together in a smooth and harmonious way. It injects a confidence level in cooperative and collaborative efforts that enhance the prospects for success rather than failure. The mutual mistrust between Donors and the Government generally was felt by both parties in varying degrees of intensity, but I suppose that is the pain of initiating a partnership that is not mutually understood as such.

The foregoing speak to the overarching research puzzle that I posed at the beginning of this thesis, which is: why is it that Donor-Government partnerships do not seem to work well? The stories from the field that are narrated in the preceding chapter

raise a number of implications for researchers, practitioners and recipient countries, which will be discussed momentarily but, first, what is the value of a study of this kind? Should it matter? Does it make any worthwhile contribution to our understanding of Donor-Government partnerships?

What Difference Does It Make?

Important contributions to the literature on a subject may come in the form of key questions being raised in research that have not been addressed before or, if they have been discussed, only in passing without sufficient deliberation to provoke serious reflection and/or action. Apart from problematizing, critiquing, or identifying gaps in knowledge that need to be filled, important contributions can also come in the form of proposing solutions to particular problems. In this study, I have attempted to do both by focusing on the problematique of Donor-Government partnership through three distinct strands of articulation: i) an insider perspective borne out of personal experience of the phenomenon being investigated; (ii) insights into the nature of Donor-Government partnerships; and (iii) a method for interrogating and voicing the insider perspective. Each contribution and pertinent conclusions drawn are discussed below.

The Insider Voice

Development cooperation practitioners, particularly those in the donor community, have many stories to tell that can help us in understanding the complexities of doing development work in the field, especially as it relates to forming and sustaining healthy partnerships. Pragmatic resolution of problems of the kind raised in this thesis can be achieved through reflective practice that generates experiential knowledge, which, in turn, could inform the theory needed to analyze and advance the solutions required

(Wright, 2003, p. 6). Unfortunately, because of the demands of their daily routines at work, they have little time, if any, to reflect in a more formal way on what they do. Their unique perspective is sorely needed. In a modest and exploratory way, therefore, my work has opened the door, even if ever so slightly, to the insider voice, one of many voices in the enterprise, that needs to be heard. The stories narrated in the previous chapter were useful in appreciating the connections and disconnections of development assistance, of the place of personal commitment in a larger relationship between Donors and the Government, of the dichotomy between the Centre and the Periphery, of how unrestrained power in a Donor-Government relationship could be detrimental to local ownership and of how trust suffers when sensibilities are either not recognized or are ignored. It is not enough to suggest, as is noted in Chapter 2, that aid is what the rich countries have made up their minds they would like to give, not what the poor countries would choose or that the donor can do to the recipient what the recipient cannot do to the donor in obvious reference to the power asymmetry between the two. One must go beyond these assertions and ferret out what it is that donors and recipients actually do in their interactions. Insiders are well placed to do this, which is a source of strength for this study.

What the stories that I tell illuminate would indicate that certain fundamental principles must come into play in the formation and structuring of a partnership. It is important and essential, for example, that each partner have a strong knowledge of, and sensitivity to, the political dynamics that are internal to the other. Lack of such knowledge and sensitivity has been responsible for much of the angst that both donors and recipients feel and experience. Many recipient governments, which have been

receiving donor assistance for years, do not quite know how their partners are constituted, what laws govern their operations and policies, what they can or cannot do, their operational and accountability structures, how they relate to their domestic development partners, what motivates their program managers, and so on and so forth. In the absence of this kind of knowledge base, the least a partnership could do is start by putting in place the structure and capacity to accommodate and address that need. Some of these partnerships have gone on since the 1960s. It would not be unreasonable to make some upfront investments in strengthening such long-term Donor-Government partnerships.

By engaging in reflective practice, as I have done in this study, development cooperation practitioners are likely to contribute to a deeper knowledge and understanding of how Donor-Government partnerships actually work and ways in which they could be improved.

Understanding the Nature of Donor-Government Partnerships

The discourse on partnership between donors and aid recipients is very narrowly focused, dealing as it is with management process issues such as operational procedures, accounting and accountability, coordination, and roles and responsibilities. These, in turn, generate debates on psycho-ethical issues, such as trust and ownership related to *bilateral* relations between Donor and Government. Multilateral aid agencies deal with central governments, and so do the bilateral donor agencies. By definition, they deal on a government-to-government basis, i.e., donor-to-central government. Donors generally do not do the bush dance. By this I mean they have no direct experience of working in and with the Periphery, i.e., regional, district, and ward governments, let alone village councils. This is a major handicap in Donor-Government partnerships as presently

conceived and practiced. My stories from the field were selected to shed light on this dilemma and show how current partnerships act to undermine their usefulness and sustainability.

The bush dance is value for money and Donors need to engage in it if they are serious about engendering local ownership of the development agenda. Some donors, such as CIDA, are already sensitive to this and are engaged in what is called DWAps, i.e., district-wide approaches to program development and delivery, because of the limitations of the sector-wide approach which tends to be a preoccupation of the Centre *by the Centre, and for the Centre.* A district-wide approach means getting to know and understand the complex politics of the hinterland which may not be the same as obtains at the Centre. As already noted in the previous chapter, patron-client relationships tend to dominate much of the politics at the Periphery. Seppala (2000) suggests that

> When a project enters an area, it lands in a setting of competitive patronage networks. In order to survive and succeed, a project must establish liaisons with key actors in some of the most powerful local patronage networks. Like our Rabbit, the aid project needs to feel its way around the difficult problems. If the aid project is clever enough, it manages to form necessary coalitions and attain its own goals. However, the process whereby these goals may possibly be attained is affected by a number of hurdles and complications. (pp. 158-159).

The bush dance would enable donors to get a proper handle on those hurdles and complications and create, in cooperation with its partners at the Centre, the necessary coalitions or local partnerships that will strengthen the prospects of mutual trust and local ownership in the partnership that emerges.

In this thesis, I raised or alluded to a number of issues pertaining to Donor-Government relationships, such as the lack of a common language which impedes understanding; the power asymmetry that underscores the pretence to partnership; agency – the critical importance of individual actors as representatives of their respective organizations – that is overlooked or not recognized; and the lack of agreement on premises, assumptions, functions, roles and responsibilities of the partners which only serve to create confusion and uncertainty. Resolution of these problems will not be easy but the partners can begin by taking time, rather than rushing the process, to develop their partnership, making transparent and explicit their respective interests, objectives and commitments. In this process, who initiates what for what purpose and to what end becomes less contentious and would be more of a *negotiated theatre* that would have the advantage of frustrating the *ownership skepticism* that Mackin (1996) alludes to.

In Chapter 2, I reviewed the particular issues of ownership and trust (see pp.50-56), shedding light on the nuanced meanings of these concepts. *Ownership* and *trust* are essential constructing and process elements in any healthy Donor-Government partnership, yet these terms are little understood in the donor community. Ownership is often equated with political will and commitment, and trust with whether or not one party is inclined to agree or disagree with the predisposition or pre-determined position of the other. We need to understand the constitutive properties of trust and how they come into play in Donor-Government interactions. Similarly, the dichotomy between actual and perceived ownership needs to be understood in order for us to appreciate our own assumptions and motivations and those of the other party. In this study, I have

endeavoured to address these issues in ways that help to clarify our understanding of the concepts.

Partnership in the current discourse pertaining to Donor-Government interaction is hardly defined in ways that reflect and capture the true workings of the relationship. This concern prompted me to examine just how a Donor-Government partnership is constituted and functions in reality. How do we know there is a partnership in operation when we come upon one and how might we distinguish it from other observable phenomena? The answer lies in categorizing partnership types so that we can recognize the phenomenon when it happens. The 5-tier typology of partnership, based on the concept of power, and reviewed in Chapter 2, provides a useful beginning in categorizing and understanding Donor-Government partnerships. These partnerships are often organized, formally or informally, around a project or a program; in the case of this study, the development of a sector-wide program in education. The internal dynamics of the partnerships, which require, among other things, the principles of ownership and trust to make them work effectively, are very complex. The 5-tier typological framework already mentioned, based on process and the concept of power, permit the development of some insights into the nature of the partnerships.

The 5-tier typology does not fully capture the intricate and sometimes subtle range of the *being* of Donor-Government partnerships. For example, to what extent do *purpose* level concerns drive particular types of partnerships? Let us consider briefly partnership as a leveraging concept and as pre-emptive, social marketing and social change devices.

Partnership as a *leveraging* concept is not uncommon among donor agencies where a donor, invoking the motherhood mantra of mutual benefit, spends a good deal of its time wooing other donors, like-minded or not, and makes a little investment in (anticipated) return for relatively high socio-political benefit to itself. This leveraging dance, which calls for a high degree of coordination of donor efforts by the donors, may have no bearing on any prior agreement with the recipient government as to area of focus or intervention. The leveraging donor simply believes that its idea of development intervention is what the country needs and where other donors ought to be and should be supporting. If successful, the recipient government finds itself pondering, contesting or acquiescing to a powerful collective donor voice on where priorities and programming should rest in the evolving formal or informal Donor-Government partnership. The extent to which the inter-agency partnerships work may indeed affect Donor-Government relationships, a subject in itself that needs greater probing.

Partnership as a *pre-emptive* device is not unlike Kernaghan's *phony* typology. Its purpose is to defuse a current or potential hostile situation (Torjman, 1998). A good example is Nigeria returning to civilian rule in May 1999 after decades of military dictatorship. Donors were quick to return to the country and were falling over each other literally to do *governance* in an oversubscribed bid to pre-empt any possible return to military rule that might be occasioned by civilian mismanagement or misrule. Saving Nigeria for democracy was the prime objective here and harvesting a *democracy dividend* became the rallying cry of both the Government and the Donors. *Development* in the circumstances seemed an afterthought. Five years now into civilian rule, donors have settled into a regular pattern of development intervention although some Western

diplomatic missions on the ground continue to view *governance* as a must-do sector. CIDA, which was in Nigeria a couple of months after the civilian regime was sworn in in May 1999, opted for intervention in the critical areas of the environment and health, recently adding agriculture to its portfolio as a result of ministerial interest. It treats *governance* not as a sector for concentration but as a cross-cutting theme that is considered in its programming strategies and program implementation.

Partnership as a *social marketing* device is a business practice in which a business, as part of its marketing strategy, agrees to promote a social cause (Torjman, 1998). In Donor-Government partnerships, *social marketing* is borne out of donor country foreign policy configurations. The cause being promoted could be domestic political stability and economic stability if not growth within the larger context of a global neo-liberal economic security. Nowadays, it could be the need to fight terrorism wherever it has the potential to raise its ugly head. These objectives are not always transparent or explicit in negotiating Donor-Government relationships. The extent to which this *hidden agenda* scuttles ownership and trust in Donor-Government partnerships needs interrogating.

Finally, partnership as a *social change* device aims to engineer a transformation in governance in the recipient country in order to address such difficult problems as inter-ethnic or community violence, general political instability, rampant unemployment, restive youth, and poverty. Donor involvement in this arena could be tense as too much proactivity may be interpreted as undue interference in the internal affairs of the recipient country, leading to resentment in some quarters. To what extent does such resentment negate recipient country *commitment*? That would make for an interesting study.

The 5-tier typology is helpful in categorizing and explaining Donor-Government partnerships. However, a more comprehensive *mix* of partnerships, which is beyond the scope of this study, would provide a greater understanding of the partnership environment of development cooperation. The mix would involve donor-donor partnerships, donor-civil society partnerships (domestic and in-country in the field), Northern NGO-Southern NGO partnerships, South-South partnerships, and of course Donor-Government partnerships. These combinations of partnerships could then be examined in terms of an input-throughput-output-outcome continuum, which would address purpose and process issues and how they work to affect Donor-Government partnerships.

Memory-Work as an Investigative Tool

The challenge in doing this work insofar as the memory-work method is concerned is that there was virtually no previous work on the method as it relates to development cooperation from which I could draw. However, well-kept notes, minutes, and a personal diary helped immensely in triggering and generating memories that formed a major basis for my data collection and analysis. Development cooperation practitioners, at headquarters or in the field, who wish to pursue a similar research effort will, at least, have a framework that they could use and build upon. They do keep personal records of transactions, meetings, events, and so on. Potentially, these records are a rich and robust source of raw primary data waiting to be mined. Memory-work in development cooperation research is a method that they could apply in (re)searching their data sources and writing up their research findings. In this regard, this study can claim a modest contribution to the field.

Donors that engage in support to the basic education sub-sector as a matter of policy do not generally have different policies for different countries. Usually, their intervention policies in the sector or sub-sector are pre-determined and applied in the countries in which they operate. Differences occur in the form of the specific activities that they choose to highlight for funding: teacher training, learning material and equipment supplies, girls' education, infrastructure support, etc. It is, therefore, likely that the method and findings of this study can be applied to a setting elsewhere that is similar to Tanzania's (heavy dependence on donor assistance with the donors very much in the driver's seat) and the unique meanings and interpretations derived from the Tanzanian context will remain the same. As discussed in Chapter 3, providing a rich description of the context of this study enhances transferability but, in the final analysis, it is up to "[the] person who wishes to 'transfer' the results to a different context [to make the] judgment of how sensible the transfer is" (Trochim 2002).

Implications of the study

There are a variety of important voices implicated in the development enterprise, from targetted beneficiaries and recipient countries to donor agencies and development cooperation practitioners. This thesis gives accent to the insider voice and the unique perspectives that such a voice provides. In Chapter 4, it was revealed that *life* at the Periphery is sometimes taken for granted. Such taken-for-grantedness weakens local commitment to government plans as was apparent in the school committee member who questioned the need for local communities to *own their* schools and those in the community who were reluctant to support the school system.

This section is concerned with the implications that the study has for me and my colleagues in the development business, for donors and recipients and for further research. Each is discussed below.

Implications for Self and Fellow Practitioners

In a modest way, my Tanzanian experience, the subject of this study, is informing what I now do. As mentioned in the opening section of this chapter, before leaving Tanzania, I suggested a local specialist replace me. My replacement is still in Dar working for CIDA as an education advisor. Back at CIDA on the Nigeria Desk, I had the unique opportunity of being on the ground floor of a process to develop a new bilateral program. It gave me an opportunity to walk my talk. In drawing up the core rationale for a programming strategy, I thought the program needed to make a community-based approach to whatever sector we ended up with as the cornerstone of the Program's strategy.

In my field missions to Nigeria in 2000 and 2001 to explore programming options for CIDA's renewed interest in Nigeria, I made sure that our team consisted of both Canadian and Nigerian experts. We ended up with three Nigerian and three Canadian consultants, one of whom was a Canadian NGO representative. Their individual expertise complemented each other's. In a country where government is suspicious of civil society and the latter is fearful and distrustful of government, seeing an NGO representative as part of a Canadian government delegation had a signal effect on our hosts. In the bilateral Memorandum of Understanding that was subsequently crafted, two critical things were stipulated. A community-based approach to programming was emphasized – which means consultations at that level - and, although a government-to-

government program, the option to deal directly with state and local governments and with NGOs and NGIs were stipulated. A Nigerian delegation that subsequently visited CIDA reiterated and affirmed these agreements or understandings. It was a rewarding beginning to a relationship that could serve as a model for development cooperation. Our environment program, for example, is slow in coming on stream but it has been necessary to carefully explore, cultivate, and understand the nature of partnerships needed to operate effectively in the Nigerian context. I have a responsibility not only to CIDA but to the Canadian public that comes in the form of partners interested in collaborating with us to work with our Nigerian partners. Viewing and treating these potential partners as simply contractors whose services could be bought for use in Nigeria is unlikely to result in meaningful partnerships whether here in Canada or on the ground in Nigeria. Nigeria's development agenda is too important in this regard to be left in the hands of one actor. The program is evolving but it is too early to tell if it will avoid the kinks that have traditionally bedeviled development cooperation partnerships.

Beyond my daily job routines at CIDA, I intend to continue the kind of work that I have undertaken in this study. Insider voices are critical in understanding the complexities and nuances of development assistance and the partnerships that are forged to undertake it. My next project will involve the collection of inside stories from willing colleagues within CIDA and perhaps from other donor agencies for publication. The process of reflecting upon my experience in Tanzania, doing this study, and writing the thesis has had a profound effect on me. I tend now to be more critical of how *we* do development. I believe that personal action and commitment are important attributes in development assistance, which could make a world of difference.

Many of us in the international development enterprise see ourselves as internationalists, people who cherish international social justice and understanding and cooperation among governments and peoples across the globe. For us, development is not just about having a job and being able to travel to exotic places at government expense. It is about making a difference, even if only in a small way, in the lives of people in poorer countries. Often, career-enhancing considerations stop us from being truthful to our cause. We remain silent when we should speak and speak when we should remain silent. What this study demonstrates reflexively is that our behaviour as individuals really does matter on how development cooperation evolves and how the business is run. In Story III about the trusted outsider, I mentioned the incidence in which the Tanzanian President's wish to hold the annual Donor-Government Consultative Group meeting in Dar es Salaam was *vetoed* by the donors. This did not do much to retain or encourage Government ownership and trust in its donor partners. It is my hope that a study such as this would encourage development cooperation practitioners to reflect more on the impact on their partners of the decisions that they make.

Implications for Donor Agencies

Donors strongly believe in partnership as a plank upon which successful development work can be undertaken. However, recipients do not necessarily share this belief. The close examination of the practical day-to-day workings of Donor-Government relations that is undertaken in this study indicates a patronage, rather than partnership, at play. Some donors have already given concrete expression to the idea of partnership. CIDA, for example, has a Partnership Branch whose mandate is to support partnerships between Canadian non-governmental organizations and institutions and their

overseas counterparts. As noted in Chapter 2, these are *contributory* partnerships in which CIDA simply makes a contribution to an NGO's project or program with little or no involvement in developing and implementing the project or program. These partnerships get evaluated and this augurs well for Northern NGO to Southern NGO partnerships. Hopefully, *cross-fertilization* will enable the lessons learned in these non-governmental relations to influence bilateral Donor-Government partnerships.

Donors use informal means to gather intelligence, which informs their decision-making and policy dialogue with recipient governments. This dialogue needs to be broadened to accommodate other stakeholders in government and the non-governmental sector. This means taking the time to consult widely, not just at the Centre but at the Periphery as well to get a proper lay of the land before programming decisions are made. As this study reveals, a better understanding of the local context can logically result from sufficiently investing in the time that is necessary to gain such understanding, which in turn helps in partner formation and management.

Development practitioners in donor agencies need to engage more in self-evaluation, be conscious of the dangers of the arrogance of power, and be critical of their own personal attitudes. Once donor or funding agency personnel start thinking *it's our money, we can demand whatever we want*, they are no longer in a partnership *game*; they are effectively engaged in a patronage. Of course, organizational culture, which is not a specific focus of this study, plays a role in the behaviour of these development practitioners but apt, at this juncture, and to conclude this section, is the observation of Lewis, et al. (n.d.):

> The focus on the ways in which people operate, both as staff of development agencies and as members of the societies where agencies are intervening, leads to a nuanced notion of the fragmented culture of development organizations, and opens up the possibility of change within development processes, especially where rural people become skilled development actors and therefore retain power over processes and meanings. (p. 9).

Implications for Official Aid Recipients

There is no doubt that many donors arrive in the field with a pre-determined agenda. Recipients need to understand the culture of the agencies they are about to partner with.[15] Different Ministries, depending on how a government structures its ministerial portfolios, deal with external assistance. In a given country, aid coordination could be the responsibility of the Ministries of Finance or economic development and planning or the Prime Minister's Office or the National Planning Commission. Like the problematic issue of local ownership, effective local coordination is difficult for recipient governments to achieve, thus weakening ownership and proactivity on their part. Communication between ministries may be poor, further hampering the ability of the coordinating ministries to be effective. In practice these coordinating ministries serve as contact points for donors on *global* issues. On more substantive matters, such as investment potential in a sector, the donors deal directly with line ministries and engage the coordinating ministries on largely protocol issues such as framework memoranda of understanding. Coordinating ministries perform several functions and it is difficult for them to effectively coordinate the sometimes heavy traffic in external aid. Like donor

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[15] As I noted in Chapter 1, in defining *effective* and *sustainable* partnership(s), these and similar conditions of Donor *arrogance* and Recipient *ignorance,* by implication, do not help in promoting sound working Donor-Government relationships.

countries which have specific agencies or departments devoted exclusively to development assistance, countries that are heavily dependent on outside assistance ought to have a department for external aid, fully staffed and equipped, with an exclusive mandate to handle the external aid environment.

Work in the gender equality field has given rise to the establishment of several ministries of women's affairs (see for example CIDA, 1997; CIDA, 1999; and United Nations, 2000 for a discussion of gender in relation to international development). Whether or not these ministries are effective is another matter. Some line ministries also have sections dealing with gender issues within the ministries. The objective is to mainstream gender equality into the life and operations of the ministry. The ministries of women's affairs take on that function for the entire country, articulating and advising other ministries on the need, in national planning and program implementation, for gendered perspectives, inputs, throughputs, and outputs. Too often, unfortunately, these offices are poorly staffed and funded to be able to perform their duties effectively. An external aid ministry would have the potential of focusing on the politics of international development issues, of local aid requirements and the management of its partnership(s) with donors.

Implications for further research

On Donor-Government Partnerships. Bilateral Donor-Government partnerships per se are not usually the subject of program reviews and evaluation. As not much scholarly work has been done in the area of government-to-government partnerships, it would be useful for researchers to study the nature and scope of the relationships between this set of donors and recipients in order to facilitate the generation of specific theories to

explain the workings and effectiveness of bilateral partnerships. The Partnership Branch of CIDA supports linkages between Canadian universities and colleges and their counterparts in developing countries. Support to institutions interested in research in bilateral development assistance partnerships could be a major contribution to resolving the problems of such partnerships as identified in this study.

The glaring inequality of power that characterizes Donor-Government partnerships needs to be investigated in some depth. Recipients appear powerless and helpless but are they really? Donor program managers are an anxious bunch, eager to raise their disbursement profiles for fear they might risk losing credibility both in the field and back at headquarters. They need the cooperation of their developing country partners to be successful. What leverage, if any, does a recipient country have in such a circumstance? Is mutual dependence possible? Research designed to unravel this aspect of Donor-Government cooperation would be quite instructive.

Policies and programs are drawn up implicitly in the name of the people but local circumstances may be such that government is unable to consult widely before instituting policies. Buy-in by local stakeholders is a great enhancer of the country ownership that both donors and the recipient countries desire. Lack of it as was shown in the last chapter could frustrate attempts by the Centre to implement its plans. Research into local needs and politics might be important in influencing how Centres relate to Peripheries in pursuit of development.

The issues of trust and ownership will continue to be important principles in Donor-Government partnerships. Cultural variation may mediate how trust and ownership work in practice and research into cultural interpretations of these principles

might help further our understanding of the underlying causes of success or failure in this domain.

On Trust and Ownership. Trust in Donor-Government relationships needs deeper probing. Could qualitative studies, relying on close observation and interviews, not probe explicitly about the trusting relationships between Donors and Governments? Have Donors and Governments been in a trusting relationship that failed? If so, why and how? What did the collaborators expect to gain out of their relationship? What are the risks in trusting a particular individual or agency? Were there any uncertainties about this individual or agency before an existing relationship was established? Answers to these and other similar questions would go some way in deepening our understanding of the role of trust in a partnership. The extent to which local capacity, inter-group interests and incentives, and command or *response ability* determine the structure and processes of Donor-Government partnerships and the commitments that flow from them also needs careful probing.

On Memory-Work. Evaluative work and critical commentary in development anthropology, such as the works of Wright (2003), Brock-Utne (2000), Crewe and Harrison (1998), and Green (1986) have made major contributions to our understanding of the field. However, development cooperation insiders who wish to undertake similar work as mine, individually or collectively, would benefit from further research into the specific modality and application of memory-work to development cooperation. How might such data be transformed into cogent meanings using the research method of memory-work? There is a need to explore possible options in the method for doing memory-work. In my own work in this study, I relied much on extensive writing. I do

know, however, that many development cooperation practitioners, apart from keeping written records of their experiences, do videotape and take pictures in the field and other fora of particular events of interest to them and their agencies. Donor agencies also sponsor and support development documentaries that are designed for public education or fundraising activities. Increasingly, more visual and artistic approaches in the area of self-study (e.g., performance, photography, art installation and video documentary) bring modes of inquiry, data analysis and representation closer together and suggest alternates in the doing of this type of research (see, for example, Weber & Mitchell, in press; Mitchell, 2003). A documentary that captures a Donor-Government partnership in action, from *policy dialogue* or exploratory deliberations on sector intervention to program or project completion and evaluation, or even particular periods in the life of the partnership, would, indeed, be very instructive in our understanding of the dynamics of such partnerships.

A Modest Proposal for Enhanced Partnerships

As I stated earlier in this chapter, it is benefiting to end this thesis and this chapter with a modest provisional proposal for an enhanced partnership framework that addresses the question of how such partnerships might be structured and how they might effectively operate.

In light of the issues discussed in the previous chapter about the limited scope of the Donor-Government partnership at play, a clear need arises for more analytic and action-oriented tools for thinking about how partnerships in SWAp contexts work. As already suggested, the proposal presented here, in this regard, is tentative and intended to address such a partnership deficit. It is aimed particularly at development cooperation

practitioners who may consider it, or a variation of it, for possible application. I call it the *partnership communities framework*, which is graphically illustrated on page 198. Donor-Government partnerships can work effectively in ways that satisfy the mutual interests, goals and objectives of the partners if the current focus of such partnerships, centred on Donor-Government interaction, is extended to include other levels or community of partnerships. The framework is proposed as a tool to engender horizontal and vertical consultative processes that involve partnership configurations at various levels of the local system. It places recipient governments, donors and NGOs (profit and non-profit) at the core[16] in policy formulation and program development, planning and implementation.

The actual workings of a Donor-Government partnership in sector program development are transformational in nature because the programs that emerge from such partnership arrangements tend to be large in scope and may require a new way of thinking to make them work effectively. This new way of thinking or behaviour is focused on the recipient country's intended mission, strategy, goals and objectives, methods, leadership, and societal/organizational culture (rules, values and norms) – articulated as clearly as possible. This is in contrast to discrete project activity that is transactional in nature, i.e., the projects undertaken are, generally, relatively small and involve bilateral cooperation rather than multilateral collaboration.

[16] The core is the *intersection* (dark-shaded area) at which the interests of the principal actors meet or coincide.

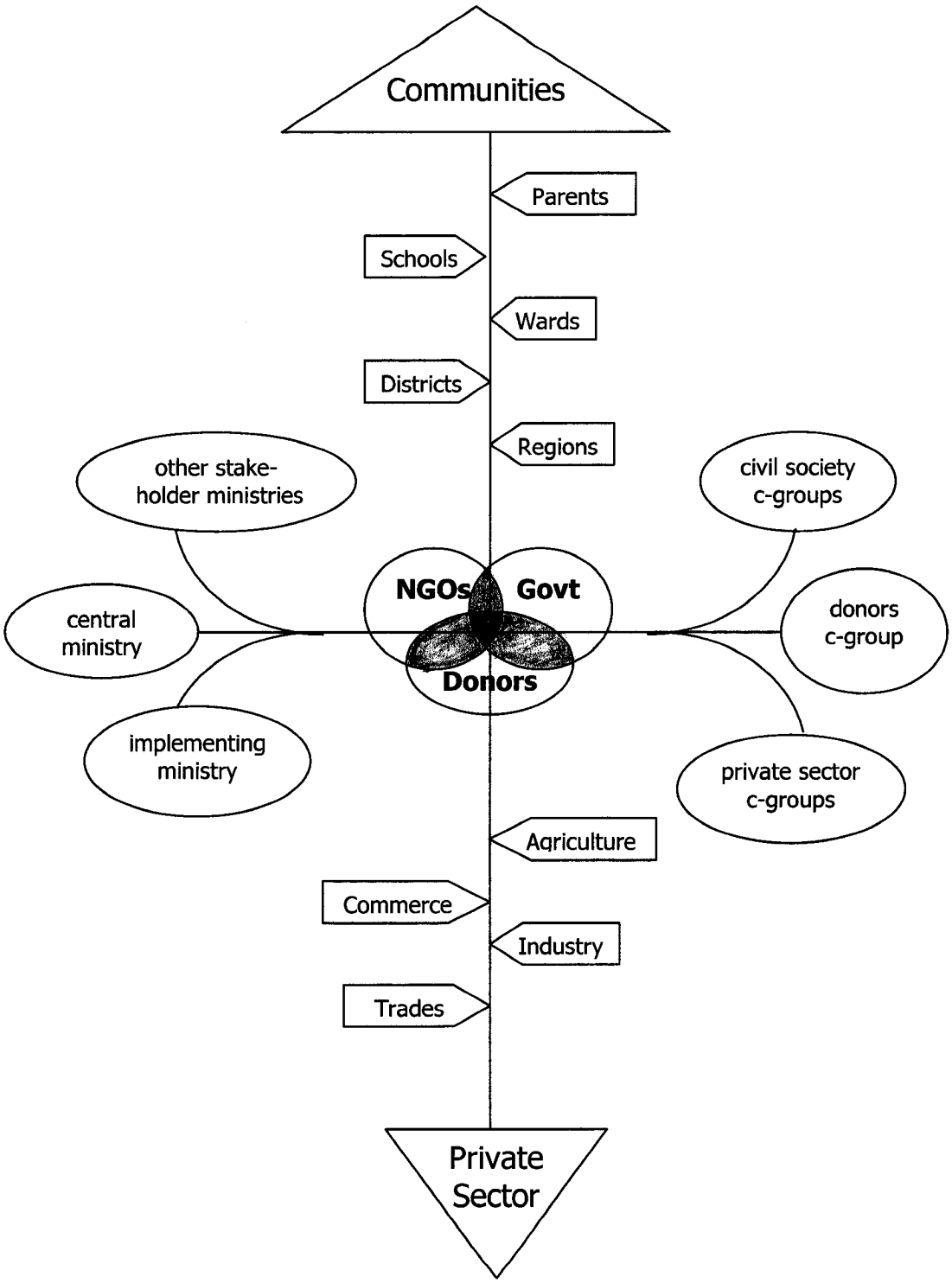

Figure 1 - ODA Partnership Communities Framework
In-Country Configuration

The framework would entail work based on system-wide consultation, active participation of key stakeholder groups (in education, incidentally, everyone is a stakeholder!), open exchange of information, and agreements at various levels of participation. At the community level, for example, discussion and agreement might focus on a community's interests and motivation; their *response ability*; parents' values, attitudes and needs; the local political climate; practices, systems and structure to govern the consultation process, and finally some performance standards against which results can be measured.

This framework allows for optimal operations to take place at the core (the dark-shaded area) involving the principal actor-organizations that constitute a *trilateral* partnership, i.e., the recipient government's sectoral Ministry (e.g., the Ministry of Education), donor community representatives, and NGOs. Just at the borders of the *trilateral* core (light-shaded areas) are the *peripheral bilaterals*: Government-NGO, Donor-NGO, or Government-Donor interaction. While each of these *peripheral bilaterals* may focus its partnership on different aspects of program development and implementation, they tend to differentiate between partners (the two participating partners), clients (target beneficiaries) and contractors (project implementers), with clients and contractors acting or perceived as non-stakeholders. These *bilateral* partnerships are not as effective as the ideal trilateral arrangement being proposed. A *trilateral* would get all the critical partners on board and takes a more comprehensive view of its deliberations. Outside the *trilateral* and *bilateral* spheres, the illustration shows the location of critical stakeholders on a horizontal-vertical axis, which provides the possibility of different working arrangements that could be undertaken but ultimately

they come together as a trilateral partnership at the core, through their representatives, for *consensus* deliberation.

The horizontal spectrum in Figure 1 shows that the core partners come to the table as representatives of their respective constituencies. This framework assumes that there will be an enabling environment that allows civil society groups, for example, to articulate their needs and potential contributions in a SWAp arrangement. These groups then would have a voice at the deliberation and negotiation table through its chosen representative/s; similarly for private sector groups and the donor group. These are groups external to the government.

At the other end of the horizontal spectrum would be organizations that are internal to the government. The sectoral ministry representing the government at the core would consult very closely with central ministries such as the Ministry of Finance, which may have overall responsibility for liaison with donors. In education and training, a variety of other ministries do have a stake in the outcome of a sector arrangement in education as they may have a training function. The sectoral ministry at the core would bring their unique concerns and inputs to the table for consideration. In countries like Tanzania, planned decentralization of service provision (discussed in Chapter 4) means that it is the Ministry of Regional Administration and Local Government that will implement, at the local level, whatever agreement is reached at the core. It is critical, therefore, that the sectoral ministry understands very well the interests, concerns and suggestions of the arm of government (the implementing ministry) upon which the entire system would depend for service delivery and success. In situations where the Ministry of Health, for example, as is the case in Tanzania, is responsible for providing nutrition

(feeding programs particularly at the junior levels of primary schools) and health services, the Ministry is an important stakeholder and ought to be closely consulted.

The vertical partnerships would involve governments at the local level, school, parents and various private sector groups with a keen interest in the outcome of a sector program. Often, as the data presented in Chapter 4 show, the farther away one is from the Centre, the less likely one is to hear about the details of Government-Donor deliberations on a sector development program. I noted the case, in that chapter, of headteachers, let alone parents or communities, who were not well-informed, if they were informed at all, of what was happening in the Centre between the donors and their central government. A command decision-making process ensures that those out in the regions and districts and farther down the chain of the political administrative set-up take orders rather than actively participate by deliberating locally and contributing to the discussions at the Centre. Any talk of local ownership would be problematic if these constituencies (schools, parents, communities, wards, districts, and regions) are denied active participation in the process.

For central governments that are desperate to acquire funding resources from outside benefactors and a donor community that is driven by short timeframes and the urge to disburse funds quickly, this framework would seem an expensive proposition because system-wide consultations could be very time consuming and expensive. It need not be so. Change management is not an easy task in the best of environments but it is paramount that a culture of consultation be embraced. Once groups know that their interests and views would be taken seriously in policy development and program design, they are more likely to be fully committed as participants and to respond more positively.

For such consultations to be successful, the legitimate roles and interests of *outsiders* must be recognized. Trust, respect for local voices, mutual learning, flexibility in the scheduling of consultations (to allow for maximum stakeholder participation), and the efficient sharing of information and ideas must govern how the consultations are conducted. Where, and if necessary, the funds required for these outsiders to play their respective roles must be provided. It should not be viewed as an unaffordable luxury but as a necessary cost of doing business.

Making My Exit and Toward an Epilogue

Finally, it is time to bring closure to this thesis. It has been an engaging and emotional journey for me, and quite a revealing and learning experience. In the process, however, I gained some measure of self-renewal, not to mention a new sense of commitment. The stories that I narrated in the preceding chapter were written out of a deep concern that donors, no matter how much they talk about wanting to engage recipient governments in development cooperation partnership, are not interested in, nor are they really capable of, relating to aid recipients as equals and partners. Also of concern to me is the fact that people like me, working for donor agencies as officers or sectoral specialists, befuddled and constrained by our crippling culture of paper shuffling, do often tend to hide behind the masks of officialdom, of rules and regulations, of policies and directives, of foreign policy objectives, of plans and strategies and, as such, constitute ourselves, unwittingly, as part of the problem. Reflexively, therefore, my own character, background and subjectivity not only shed light on my role in constructing the stories but served as both a producer and a product of the stories that I told.

From the days of the Marshall Plan to the Pearson Report on *Partners in Development* and up to the present time, sustainable Donor-Government partnerships in development cooperation have remained a vexing problematique. As much as these partnerships are valued by donors and development cooperation practitioners, the fact remains that hegemonic rituals exercised by the more dominant partners in development interventions in Tanzania point to a patronage system at work rather than genuine partnerships in which mutual trust and local ownership underscore the relationship between Donor and Government.

Through the stories from the field that are narrated in Chapter 4, it is clear that self as agency and donor/recipient country attitudes and positions are instrumental in fostering or frustrating workable partnerships. When *we* are, sometimes, too self-absorbed to even concede the site of a consultative meeting in favour of a local venue, which had proven to be very successful and beneficial to the host government and its people, we are neither advancing the cause of good partnership nor are we laying a solid foundation for a robust and mutually-benefiting relationship. It is my hope that critical self-examination that underscores the concept of reflective practice will be embraced by development cooperation practitioners, for as Cream Wright (2003) suggests, until practitioners in the donor world engage in more reflective practice and reveal insider voices, we would continue to live and practise our *craft* in the dark. Development cooperation practitioners in donor agencies who embrace and undertake reflective practice are very rare indeed. In development anthropology, the more insider voices we have in this regard, the better our chances of bringing about a world of sensible and sustainable partnerships in development.

It is also my hope that the modest provisional framework that I propose in this concluding chapter for an enhanced or inclusive partnership arrangement involving all major stakeholders, at different levels of the political and administrative system, rather than just Donor-Government, will be considered and refined by development cooperation practitioners for their own purposes as they seek better ways of partnering with host governments and non-governmental organizations and institutions.

I started this thesis with a prologue and will now conclude it with an epilogue. The epilogue begins on the next page.

Epilogue

Buzzwords come and go. Some are short-lived. Others, like *partnership*, simply will not go away; they manage to get reinvented when we think they are about to be ditched for something more fanciful, dramatic or brilliant linguistically or conceptually. SWAps, as an expression, it would appear, is now dying a slow death and more and more, reference is being made in the development cooperation community to PBAs or Program-Based Approaches. PBAs, as an expression, was adopted recently by the SWAp network hosted by CIDA, to replace SWAp. PBAs, it is argued, speak more to the underlying principles in SWAp arrangements,

> not the sector-specific character of SWAps or even local government leadership (as opposed to local ownership more generally). The expression PBAs more accurately reflects the interest of the network in pre-SWAp, SWAp, post-SWAp and SWAp-like initiatives (now called 'other PBA.' (from an exchange of e-mails on September 11, 2002 with the coordinator of the CIDA SWAp Network).

In the end, it may not matter because terms like SWAps are coined and used by the donors. Recipient countries tend to ignore them in their own language and internal documents. Tanzania, for example, referred to its education SWAp as the Education Sector Development Program. The Comprehensive Development Framework mentioned in Chapter 2 is encouraging interest in inter- and multi-sectoral work as well and it may not be long before other catchy acronyms pop up. In the final analysis, it is how well we *do* development to lessen aid dependency and the exit strategies we embrace that matter.

The SWAp network run by CIDA's Policy Branch has attracted membership from other donor agency personnel, NGOs, consultancies, and individuals from around the

world who are subscribed members. Membership is free. It is likely to be just a matter of time before SWAp disappears from our development lexicon unless SWAp sways the majority of these network subscribers and they choose to hang on to its usage. How long PBAs would last is anybody's guess. Perhaps the quality and character of the relationship between donor and recipient will eventually come to dominate the discourse and be more important in the overall scheme of things than the bureaucratic process the partners go through to develop policy and bring into play particular program designs and orientation, and how they are implemented and evaluated. After all, governments do not run discrete projects all over the place. The self-defeating art of discrete *projecting* is a donor invention. However, should the need arise for a donor country to raise or show its flag, it will resort to the only approach that will give it the differentiation that it seeks – discrete projecting. Hopefully, however, recipient countries would have mastered the art of comprehensive programming and could easily slot in such discrete projects and the sponsors of such projects would get their due recognition and all parties would be happy.

Evolution and change in organization and policy in development agencies, official or private, it would seem, is only a matter of when, not if, they will happen. Donors and the Government of Tanzania now have a partnership agreement to guide their relationship. They have even managed, after years of trying, to work out an arrangement to accommodate the NGO sector as potential allies and partners in development. This bodes well for Tanzania as all hands can be relied upon to be on deck when it hits the turbulent rough waters of development.

In the case of the ESDP in Tanzania, it was finally decided to abandon the grand illusion of a *sector-wide* program that no donor was willing to support except for its basic

education component and settle for a Basic Education (Sub)Sector Development Program. The Government of Tanzania will continue, however, to work on the other education sub-sectors. Progress, I would imagine, would be tied inextricably to availability of funding, i.e., donor interest.

An interesting development is a recent request by the Government of Tanzania asking all donors to give it a 5-month breathing space. From April to August each year, it has asked that no donor missions arrive in the country and it looks like donors are honouring the request. A Government that was too passive is now asserting its will and preferences. It augurs well for the future of Donor-Government relations in the country.

CUSO has come a long way since its early days in Nigeria when its mandate was very clear and it could not recruit non-Canadians for its volunteer program abroad. It is now common to meet CUSO coopérants of various nationalities who are not Canadian citizens. The partnership is one that is empowering and welcomed by its participants, both Canadian and non-Canadian (conversation with a Ghanaian CUSO coopérant serving in Canada in 2002). CUSO's British counterpart, VSO, has gone global by setting up shop in Canada as a Canadian NGO and recruiting Canadians for postings overseas as volunteers. Welcome to the global village!

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