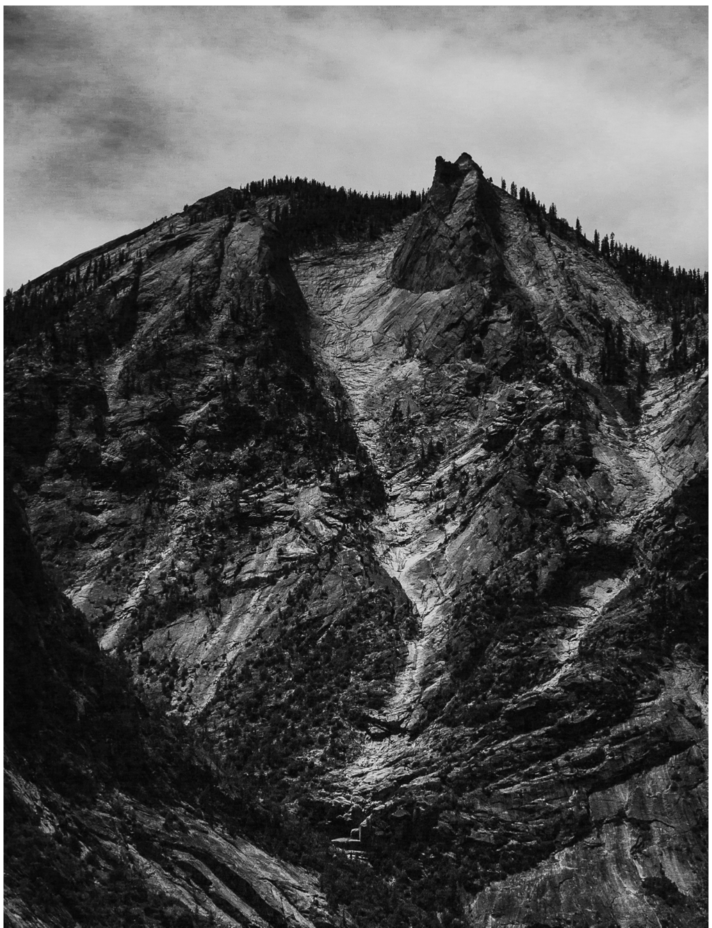
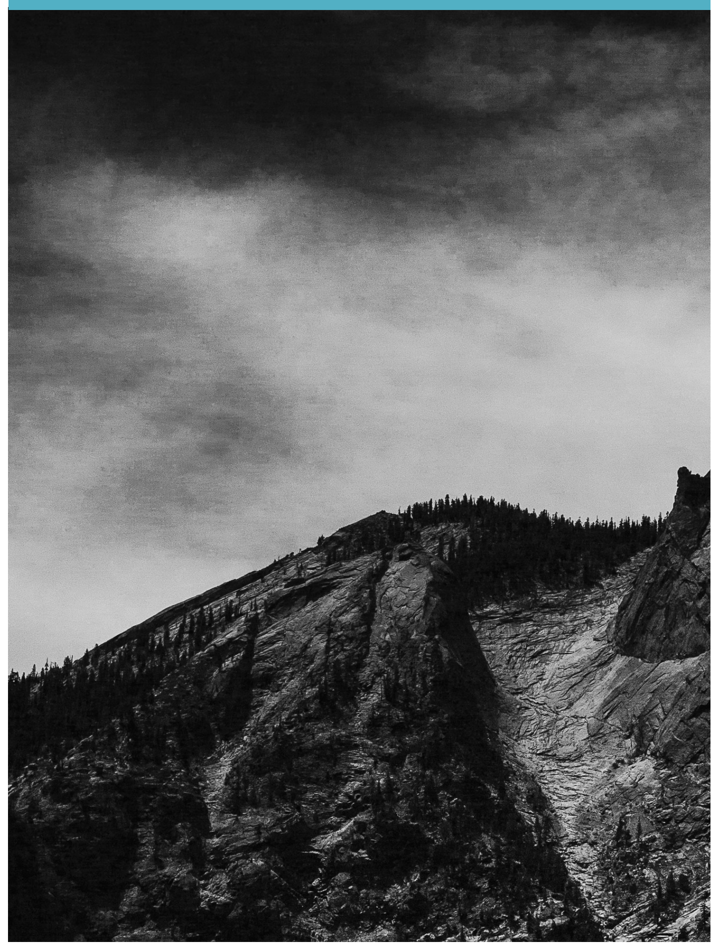
PARTNERSHIP CAPACITY

Five Cooperative States
of Partnership Performance





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INTRODUCTION

Partnerships and relationships are intrinsic to international development. The development community recognizes that strong partnerships and relationships are necessary for the achievement of development goals.[1] Almost every effort by the international development community involves, whether recognized or not, a web of partnerships and relationships between outside agents and national actors. We have observed that that the quality of these partnerships and relationships affect every aspect of development projects, including risk, performance, sustainability, scalability, and impact.

We believe these relationships have not been managed as well as they could have been, and that this is due in part to the lack of tools to measure the quality of partnerships. Our firm has solved this problem. Our tools enable any actor to measure the current quality of a partnership, and, in particular, its cooperative capacity. Knowing the current cooperative capacity of a partnership is important because it predicts the future behavior of the partnership and its ability to complete its mission. This essay introduces the concept of cooperative capacity, its application, and its immediate uses and benefits.

ISSUES WITH DEFINING AND ASSESSING THE QUALITY OF PARTNERSHIPS

"Partnership" is a fuzzy concept within the development community, and partnership-building remains difficult to plan, monitor, and evaluate. This is a widely-recognized problem.

There is not yet a consensus on the definition of "partnership". A literature review by Horton et al., in an incomplete list, sets out thirteen different definitions for partnership. This lack of consensus is abetted by the different types of partnerships, the variety of partnership goals, and the variability in the quality of partnerships.

Furthermore, research on partnership effectiveness is scarce and weak. Much of the research has been focused on overall project results and not on how the structure and management of the partnership affected those results (Caplan et al.). There also appears to be little empirical testing of partnership hypotheses in the research (Horton et al.). Our own review of the literature found that while the development field has developed a large number of partnership frameworks, there is little documentation tying those frameworks to measures of partnership or project effectiveness.

This means that within the development community there is currently no validated framework for partnerships with hard, predictive measures of partnership effectiveness. This absence is reflected in the literature:

- "Consensus has not been reached about how to measure the health of partnerships" (Caplan and Jones, page 2).
- "… there is limited systematic evidence of a link between partnership and improved development outcomes. Alongside this, there is a widespread lack of clarity regarding how best to practically ascertain the effectiveness of partnerships" (Hollow, page 4).
- "There is a clear need for more systematic and in-depth empirical research on partnership experiences" (Horton et al., page vi).

[1] Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005); Accra Agenda for Action (2008), OECD

This inability to measure the effectiveness of partnerships in real-time is a serious impediment to development effectiveness for a number of reasons. First, key actors at the local, national, and international levels are often unaware of the partnership problems within their stakeholder system that are impeding performance. And, if they are aware, they are often unable to accurately identify which partnerships in the system are affecting project performance, sustainability, and capacity to scale.

Second, project and program designers are unable to justify the time and resources necessary to build effective partnerships in existing planning frameworks. This puts undue pressure on implementers to achieve outputs before developing the relationships necessary for sustainable results or scaling up of activities, often "stepping on the toes" of local actors in the process. Even when partnering is recognized as a priority, project-level actors must "hide" partnership-building activities inside other activities in order to implement and expense them. As a result of poor partnering, relationships deteriorate and both outside and local actors can become highly frustrated with their lack of influence, inadequate coordination, and the poor performance of the partnership.

Third, when these relationship problems are finally recognized, projects are then forced to spend time and resources repairing relationships that should have been developed prior to full-scale implementation.

Finally, without an accepted framework for assessing partnerships, reporting on partnership issues and lessons learned is ad hoc and appears to be situation specific; there is no systemic way to report on partnership issues and learnings that can be shared across projects.

All of these issues increase the risk of partnering in development programs. Weak or problematic partnerships significantly increase the risk of:

- Exclusion of national agents from the planning, implementation, evaluation, and learning outcomes of development programs
- Projects not being adopted by local agents or scaled by national agencies
- Loss of reputation and confidence in outside assistance by national governments

To reduce these risks and improve development effectiveness, a set of concrete, real-time indicators of partnership performance is needed. These indicators must be applicable to all partnerships in any program, and provide consistent analysis of the power distribution among the partners; communication and information flows within the partnership; responsiveness of the partnership; sustainable transfer of knowledge, skills, and capacity between the partners; and overall partnership performance.

Such indicators would allow project stakeholders, at almost any level, to create a program stakeholder map and determine partnership performance among the stakeholders. Such a map would benefit both implementers and designers. For implementers at all levels, the map would show the organizational and systemic blocks to the system's ability to respond to issues, provide support, achieve impacts, transfer capacity, and scale. Moreover, the framework would provide goals and objectives for improving partnership performance, and hence the system's performance. For designers, the framework would allow them to integrate partnership building into project planning and provide them with goals and timelines for establishing effective partnerships. In our experience, the earlier effective partnerships are established, the faster high levels of performance are reached, resulting in exponential increases in results as the project matures. *This new framework now exists.*

- Predict organizational performance and capacity based on any stakeholder measure
- Predict a partner's capacity to cooperate and partner, including capacity to share power, communicate, and accurately assess and respond to threats and opportunities
- Predict a partnership's performance based on any stakeholder measure

A NEW FRAMEWORK TO MEASURE PARTNERSHIP CAPACITY

Cooperative Capacity Partners' (CCP) partnership capacity framework provides hard, real-time indicators of partnership effectiveness. CCP's model provides planners and implementers with a results framework based on a simple set of leading indicators that:

Applying these indicators to a map of a stakeholder system, from the international level to the local level, allows managers to develop system-level strategies to improve both partnership and program capacity to deliver desired results.

The crucial feature of CCP's framework is that its indicators are leading indicators—they predict future performance. Moreover, these indicators apply to all types of partnerships and relationships and are consistent across time.

This paper is a first step at taking up Horton et al.'s challenge to present empirical examples of a framework that accurately reflects performance of partnerships. The discussion starts with brief review of current partnership frameworks, describes CCP's partnership capacity framework and indicators, and gives examples from the partnership literature and CCP's own field experience to show that these indicators measure concrete levels of partnership performance.

OUTLINING THE FRAMEWORK

CCP'S DEFINITION OF PARTNERSHIP

Most definitions of partnership describe some form of mature relationship in which, for the most part, goals are shared; structures are in place; responsibility, resources and accountability are shared; communication is two-way, open, and honest; and benefits and respect are mutual.

But these 'definitions' are also targets of partnership development; they describe an ideal level of cooperation for a partnership. Clearly, organizations can also be in a new or problematic partnership that does not meet these standards of cooperation. Bezanson et al. nicely describe a range of partnership relations. They write, "The very term 'partnership' is vague and can span objectives that range from—at the lower end—information sharing and 'getting to know each other better', to learning about how two parties might work together, to specific actions of an interdependent nature that assign responsibilities and accountabilities to two or more parties; to—at the higher end—an almost seamless blending of actors" (Preface).

In essence, what Bezanson et al. have described is four different levels of cooperation within partnerships, from low to high. CCP's framework takes a similar, progressive approach to partnership. CCP recognizes that partnerships come in many arrangements, and cooperation may range from non-existent to excellent. Therefore, CCP's framework adopts a broad definition that encompasses the many possible forms partnerships can take:

A partnership is the relationship between two or more organizations needed to achieve a goal.

CCP illustrates partnerships in a graphic we refer to as "the egg", shown in Figure 1 on the next page.

This illustration shows each of the partners and the partnership itself, indicating the necessity to assess each partner's abilities to collaborate as well as the collaboration of the partnership itself.

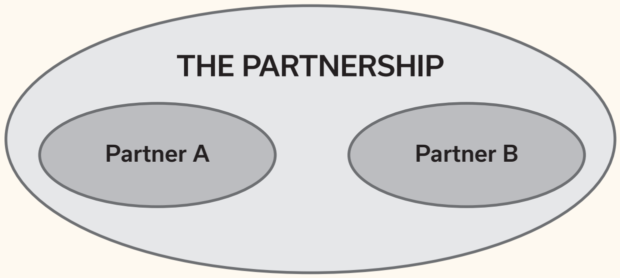


Figure 1: The Partnership Egg

There are a number of corollaries that flow from this model:

- Partnership is not defined by the quality, structure, or type of the relationship
- An organization is automatically in partnership with all of its stakeholders
- The quality of partnerships can range from "negative", where the organizations are in conflict, to "positive", where, as described above, there is "an almost seamless blending of actors"
- Each partner's ability to collaborate is an integral element of partnership assessment

The partnership criteria in most current definitions of partnership mentioned above— e.g., shared goals, resources, and power—no longer define partnership, but, as described below, become key performance indicators for determining the quality of a partnership.

The breadth of this definition is critical to the CCP framework as it allows for the assessment of any relationship between two entities, and it promotes the application of the concept of partnership to all of the relationships within a project's partnership system.

MAPPING THE PARTNERSHIP SYSTEM

In order for international aid projects to be sustainable and scalable, our analysis shows there has to be cooperation among a number of actors at the international, national, and programmatic levels. Strong partnerships and capacity transfer to permanent actors at the project level promote sustainable projects. Strong partnerships between the project level and a higher (e.g. national) level are necessary for projects to scale. At a basic level, the actors that make up the partnership system in typical development programs include outsiders and national actors working at:

- The international and diplomatic level (e.g., presidents, diplomats, heads of multilateral agencies and other donors, and international advocacy groups)
- The national level (e.g., national government departments, national mission or agency offices, local embassies, and national-level advocacy groups)
- The programmatic level (e.g., local government agencies, implementation teams, other local stakeholders)
- The population level (the groups receiving the benefits of the program, often referred to as target groups)

In these complex development systems, each stakeholder, or in CCP's nomenclature, partner, potentially influences the performance of all the other partners. Critically, we have observed that the weakest of these partners, or the weakest relationship between these partners, will constrain the ability of a project to achieve its goals, become self-sustaining, and scale. Actors need to collaborate in a many-sided dance to develop the changes that lead to desired impacts, and are sustainable locally and institutionalized nationally.

CCP uses a simple template, based on the partnership egg, to map out this partnership dance. This map is made up of a) the horizontal partnerships between the national CCP uses a simple template, based on the partnership egg, to map out this partnership dance. This map is made up of a) the horizontal partnerships between the national institutions and outside development institutions at local, national, and international levels, and b) the vertical (often hierarchical) partnerships of national and international development actors (such as the government and donors) at each level. These connections are illustrated in Figure 2.

In Figure 2, the partnership eggs denote the horizontal partnerships. These partnerships are critical for the two-way movement of information and capacity between national and outside agencies. These partnerships, most notably the program-level partnerships, promote or constrain the capacity-development performance and sustainability of any development project.

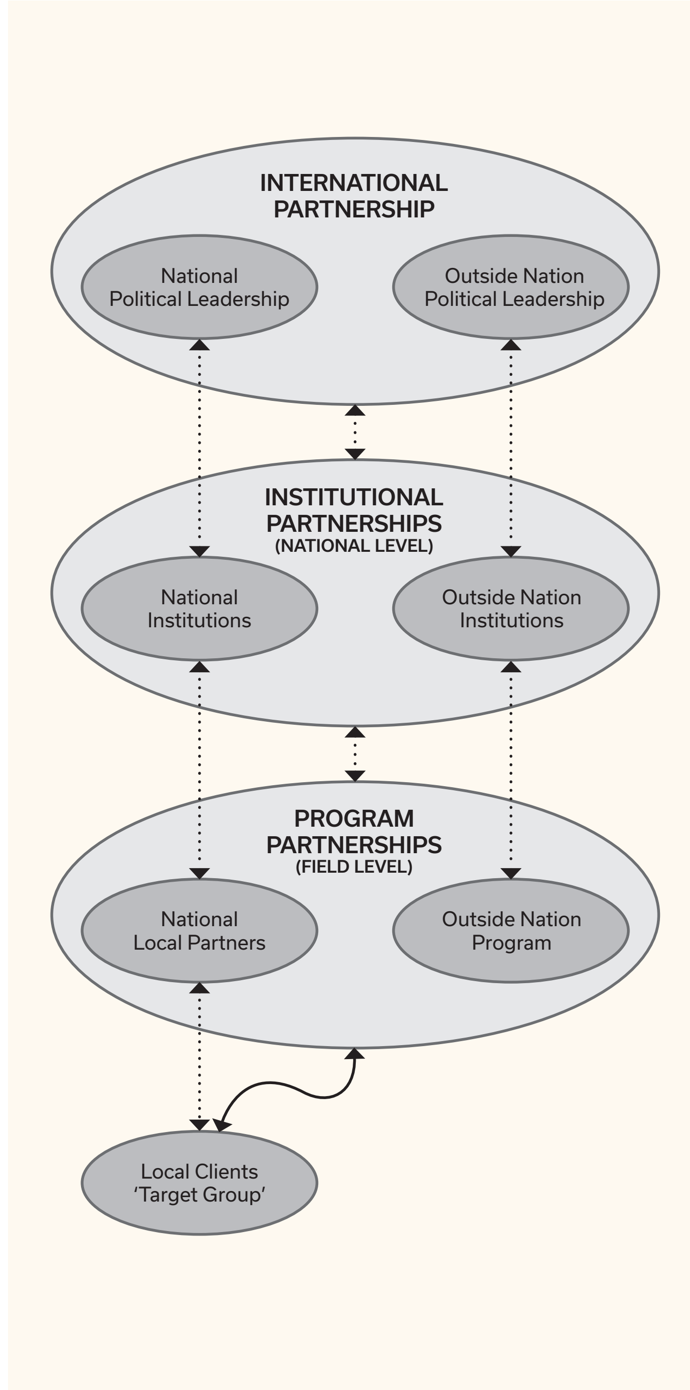


Figure 2: A Generic Partnership System

Dashed lines denote the vertical partnerships, which for clarity of nomenclature we refer to as "relationships." These relationships include both hierarchical institutional and organizational relationships, and relationships between partnerships or institutions at different levels. These relationships are critical for the movement of information up and down the system. Effective vertical communication is required for a) ensuring programs receive timely and responsive support from actors higher up the system; and, b) the scaling of projects to a regional or national level, as these relationships are the major drivers and conduits for introducing local successes higher up the system.

Failure to track and nurture all of the relationships in this dance results in:

- Lack of real-time feedback among parties, particularly between the field program and other partners
- The exclusion or disassociation of key stakeholders
- Lost opportunities for capacity transfer, sustainability, and scalability
- High risk of sudden changes in mandates, cuts in funding, or other negative surprises emanating from any of the partners

To complete the partnership system maps, there needs to be a simple way to measure the quality and effectiveness of all partners and partnerships included in the maps.

CCP's cooperative capacity model answers this need by providing objective, leading indicators called *cooperative* states that measure both.

The cooperative state of partners indicates their ability to partner, and the cooperative state of the partnership indicates the potential performance of the combined partnership. In order to improve partnership systems, it is important to know the cooperative states of partners and partnerships in the system. A poor partnership can disrupt the system, and the performance of a partnership can be held back by one partner's inability to partner at a higher level.

Now it is time to look at the cooperative capacity levels, or "states."

QUICK CASE STUDY

To give one example of the usefulness of this map, a client called on CCP to come in and help improve the management skills of their teams working in the field. Our systems mapping showed that the program was dysfunctional, and a major source of that dysfunction was the poor partnership between two government agencies in the donor's home country. The confusion between the two agencies filtered through the system, resulting in the field staff being asked to achieve two contradictory goals--a conflict that could not be resolved at their level. Thus, a major part of the solution to the management weaknesses in the field was the repair of a partnership in the donor country, some five levels of management above the field teams.

THE COOPERATIVE STATES: INDICATORS OF PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE

The cooperative capacity model is based on 15 years of CCP research and experience working with both for-profit and non-profit organizations in the US, Europe, and Indonesia. This research identified five unique, discernable, cooperative capacity states that apply to both organizations and partnerships.2 The names of the states are **Fragmented**, **Top-Down**, **Inclusive**, **Accountable**, and **Integrated**.

The key to the framework is that partnerships in each state produce measurable differences in performance. Each state is a direct measure of ability to cooperate, and higher levels of cooperation enable increased adaptability, responsiveness, and performance. Moving to a higher, more cooperative state therefore results in improved performance. CCP's 15 years of action research and review of the literature has shown us that, starting in any of the states, a jump to the next highest state will *more than double* performance by any stakeholder metric. In general, the performance levels of each state are as follows:

Fragmented

- Fragmented partnerships perform extremely poorly, are often unable to generate outputs nor able to transfer capacity. They often face the risk of outright failure.

Top-Down

- Top-down partnerships are able to generate outputs but tend to be highly bureaucratic, unresponsive, and ineffective at capacity transfer. They can survive in stable, predictable environments, but are ineffective and tend to fail in shifting, unpredictable environments.

Inclusive

- Inclusive partnerships are able to generate outputs and outcomes, are responsive, and can transfer capacity. They are able to survive in changing and competitive environments.

Accountable

- Accountable partnerships are able to generate outcomes and some impact. The are effective at capacity transfer and are strong competitors in unpredictable and changing environments.

Integrated

- Integrated partnerships are able to generate outcomes and impact. Capacity transfer and skill sharing is integral to the partnership. Integrated partnerships compete at the highest levels in complex and changing environments.

CCP has mapped out the states in a graph named the Cooperative Capacity Ladder. It shows each of the states as a relationship between the quality of cooperation and stress. The y-axis represents the level of cooperation, and thus performance, ranging from low (Fragmented) to high, (Integrated). The x-axis represents the way stress is experienced, ranging from dissociation to (felt) stress. Dissociation means that overwhelming stress is dealt with by dissociating from the vision, mission, or strategy—in other words, the feeling of stress is managed by not caring about achieving goals or objectives. Stress is only felt when there is broad ownership of the vision,

[2] Paris This article focuses on partnerships, a detailed description of cooperative capacity applied to organization will be presented in an upcoming article.

mission, and strategy, and a sense of obligation toward achieving goals.

Figure 3 shows the relationship between cooperation and stress for each state. As a partnership jumps up to the next higher state, first dissociation and then stress decrease, and cooperation and performance increase. The two lower states,

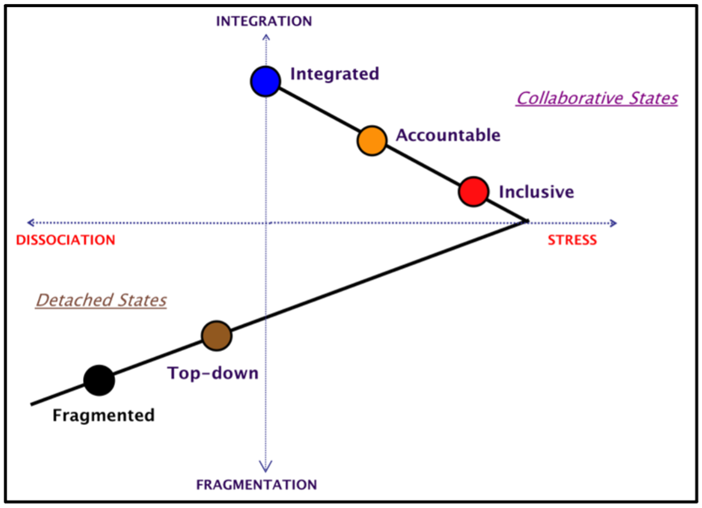


Figure 3: The Cooperative Capacity Ladder

Fragmented and Top-down, are classified as "detached states." In these dissociated states, members are neither enabled nor incentivized to invest in the vision, mission, or strategy of the group. This means they cooperate only minimally; they either sabotage the vision and mission (in Fragmented) or just do what they are told to do without concerning themselves with the strategy (in Top-down).

The three higher states, Inclusive, Accountable, and Integrated, are classified as "collaborative states." In these states, members are invested in the vision, mission, and strategy, and cooperate at progressively higher levels to achieve them. The Inclusive state is the first state in which members begin to truly cooperate.[3] However, members are unable to prioritize, hard metrics are not available, and systems that promote cooperation are not yet in place, making Inclusive the least organized and most stressed of the collaborative states. In moving into the Accountable state, members learn to prioritize, metrics for those priorities are developed, and ownership of priorities and areas of responsibility are clear. This leads to specialization and defined "lanes" within the system, as well as improved results, but performance is suboptimal due to lack of real-time coordination among the lanes. The move to Integrated entails the learning to coordinate the specialties of the lanes so that the lanes adapt strategically in the service of the overall vision and mission.

Each state has its own profile of management attributes and practices, which makes each state measurable. CCP has identified these profiles using key performance indicators (KPIs) for each state. The set of KPIs used by CCP covers:

1. Vision and Mission
2. Governance
3. Leadership
4. Management Systems
5. People and Culture
6. Communications and Knowledge Management
7. Monitoring and Evaluation
8. Stakeholder Relations

Each of these KPIs has distinctive characteristics for each state of the Cooperative Capacity Ladder. For example, in a Fragmented partnership, the vision and mission are unclear or contested and management systems are ad hoc. In a Top-down partnership, the vision, mission and

[3] The move from detached and fragmented to collaborative and low integration is shown by the large jump on the graph between Top-down (lower left quadrant) and Inclusive (upper right quadrant). This happens because detachment is characterized by members simply not caring or having any incentive to be involved. Coming out of detachment occurs when members of the system start to care about the vision, mission, and strategy; however, this new-found caring results in a great concern of "how are we going to succeed?!", generating the highest levels of felt stress of all the states.

strategies are clear and held by the dominant partner; management systems are set by the dominant partner and are inflexible; and subordinate partners follow the lead of the dominant partner. In Inclusive Partnerships, all the partners are invested in the vision and mission, and take responsibility for implementing the strategies.

This ability to profile each state allows for the creation of a maturity matrix to assess the current state of a partnership.[4]

Later in this article, we will describe the profiles of each state in more detail, and apply the profiles of the three lowest states to case studies of partners and partnerships. Each case study supplies enough information to determine the partner's or partnership's cooperative state and performance. In so doing, we are able to illustrate the correlation between cooperative capacity state and performance

Case studies are presented only for partnerships in the Fragmented, Top-down, and Inclusive states. This is because these are the most common states of partners and partnerships found in development. Due in part to the time it takes to move up the cooperative capacity ladder, first for partners and then for partnerships, and the limited time of most projects, it is rare that large projects are able to achieve Accountable or Integrated partnerships. Thus, we have not been able to find case studies of partnerships in the Accountable or Integrated states.

Finally, because the states apply to both partner organizations and partnerships, when describing factors that apply to both partners and partnerships, the term "system" will be used. For example, the phrase "Fragmented systems" will be used instead of "Fragmented partners and partnerships."

Before we begin assessing the case studies, we want to discuss a set of corollaries and complete the partnership system map.

SIMPLE RULES

The set of corollaries are called Simple Rules; they simplify the application of the framework for both partnership assessment and development.

Four of the most important Simple Rules are:

1. **A system will move only one state at a time.** When moving up the ladder, each state provides the foundation for the next state. For example, a Fragmented workgroup cannot jump to Inclusive, because the Fragmented group lacks, among other things, the distinct vision, clear structures, and defined processes necessary to be inclusive; these elements are developed during in the intermediate state, Top-down.
2. **It takes time and energy to move from one state to the next.** There is no natural, effortless progression from one state to the next. The appropriate management systems, structures, and behavior must be conscientiously introduced and applied to move up the Cooperative Capacity Ladder. If no concerted effort is made to improve cooperative capacity, the workgroup will stay in its current state.
3. **The time it takes to move up one state on the cooperative capacity ladder depends on how long the system has been in its current state and the size of the system.** The longer a system has remained in one state or the larger the size of the system, the more difficult it is and more time it will take to move up a state. Under good management, newly formed small groups may take as little as six months to move up to the next highest state, but larger groups (of around 100

[4] There is nothing uniquely significant in the seven groupings of KPIs used by CCP. Other organizational assessment frameworks that use similar KPIs can be adapted to determine cooperative capacity states.

members or more) may take anywhere from 18 months to two years to make that move. Large businesses may take from three to five years to move up a state, again assuming good management.

4. **Bringing a new member into a group temporarily returns it to the Fragmented State.** This occurs because at the start, new members do not immediately know the vision and mission, and thus bring the group into the Fragmented State. They need to learn the vision and mission and strategies, and then learn the basics of the job so they can move into Top-down. Once in Top-down, they can absorb the strategy and begin to effectively collaborate and move on to the higher states.

   For group members, this may be a quick process. If the new member is the leader, the process is more extreme and the return to a higher state may take longer. This is because there most likely will be some change in the vision and mission as defined by the new leader. This fragments the group until they move to Top-down by learning the new vision and mission and any changes in their job this may entail. Only then can the group return to the higher collaborative states.

COMBINING THE PARTNERSHIP SYSTEM WITH THE COOPERATIVE CAPACITY LADDER

The partnership system map is completed when the cooperative states are mapped onto the partnership system by applying the color codes from the cooperative capacity ladder (Figure 4). Through the color coding, we can begin to see the strengths and weaknesses of the system, and develop strategies to improve the system's performance.

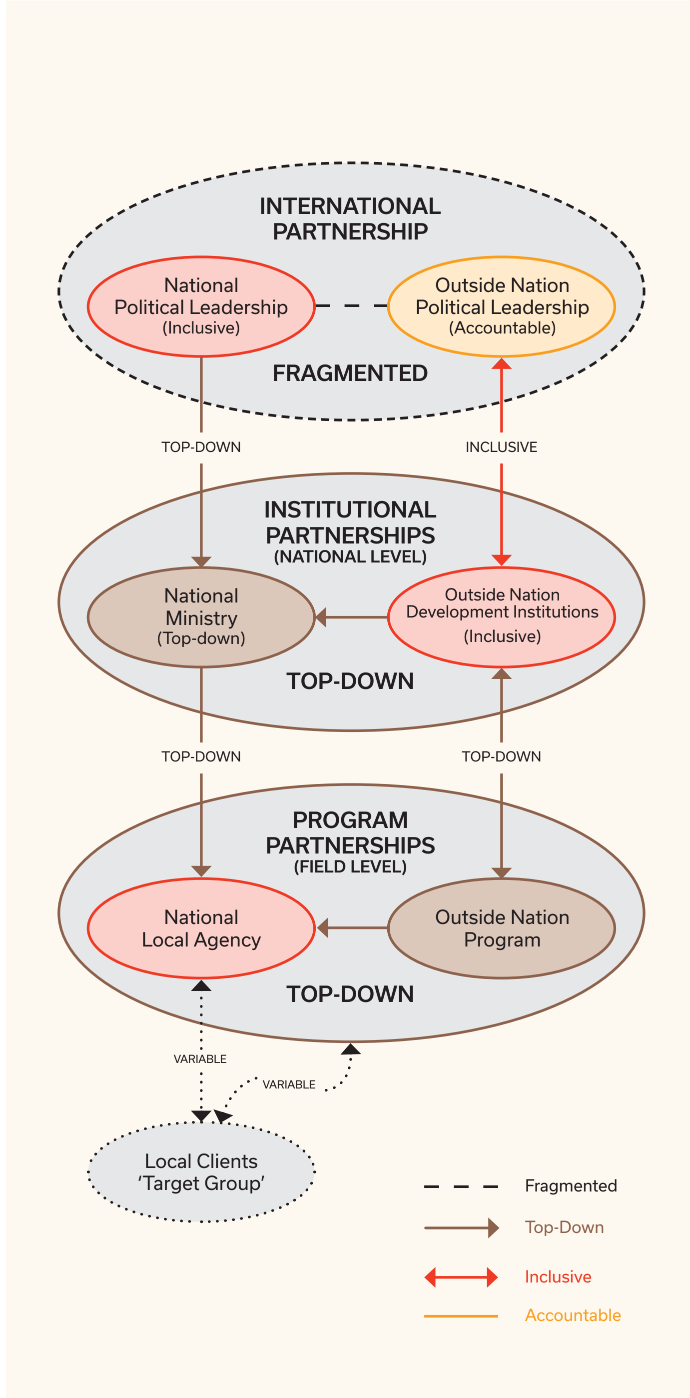


Figure 4: Example Partnership System

Figure 4 shows a simple example to demonstrate how the cooperative capacity ladder can be mapped on to the partnership system map. Each color denotes a cooperative capacity state. Arrows indicate the direction of information flows. On this map, we see both the cooperative states of the partners and the partnerships. In this example, one of the partnerships is in the Fragmented state and two are in the Top-down state. The two partnerships in the Top-down state are limited to that state by one member likewise being in the Top-down state.

From this, we can see the weakest parts of the system are the two Top-down partnerships, one at the program level and one at the national level, and the Fragmented partnership at the international level.

In accordance with Simple Rule 3, the Top-down states of the *partners* at the program and national level limit their partnerships and relationships to, likewise, the Top-down state. Therefore, any strategy to improve the system's performance would include first moving those partners and then their partnerships and relationships into the Inclusive state (how this is done will be discussed in an upcoming article). As we shall see below, in Top-down partnerships, the dominant partner controls the partnership and tends not to act on information flowing from the other partner. Thus, these Top-down partners are key blocks to the system's performance. These issues are solved when the partnership moves into the next highest cooperative state, Inclusive. Moving these partnerships into Inclusive greatly increases the flow of information between the partners and the responsiveness of the partnership. This in turn increases the system's prospect of achieving better results, including sustainable outcomes at the field level, scaled programs at the national level, and impact.

Another opportunity for improvement is the Fragmented (ad-hoc) national partnership. Moving this partnership into Top-down would also have a positive impact on the system, particularly if more support were needed from this level.

Completing the partnership system map with the cooperative states of partners and partnerships gives designers and managers an overhead view of their partnership system, and guides them to make strategic interventions for system improvement.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE FRAMEWORK

The CCP framework provides planners, implementers, and evaluators with useful tools:

1. For program planners, it provides goals (each cooperative state) and objectives (the underlying KPIs) for developing strong partnerships, and a tailored case for allocating time and resources to partnership development early in project implementation.
2. For national planners, it provides partnership development strategies for increasing the likelihood of program sustainability and scaling.
3. For implementers, it provides a monitoring and diagnostic framework for identifying and correcting weaknesses in their partnership and stakeholder systems.
4. For evaluators, it provides baseline and end line indicators of partner and partnership capacity that correlate with performance.

The following sections use case studies (where available) and CCP's own experience to describe in more detail how and why performance, responsiveness, and capacity transfer increase as partnerships move up the cooperative capacity ladder. Our experience is that the cooperative capacity states are leading indicators of the above. Moreover, we believe the framework is testable, and, at the end of the paper, invite interested parties to test it themselves.

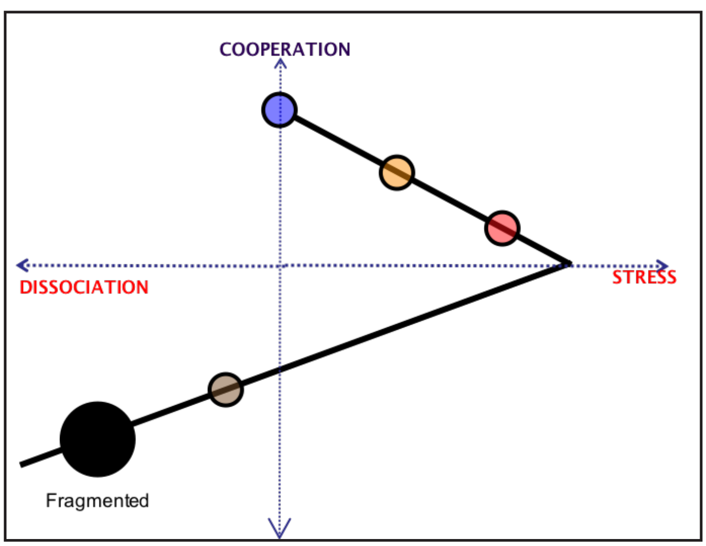
THE COOPERATIVE STATES AND PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE

As described above, it takes effort to move a partnership up the capacity ladder. Therefore, leaders and managers need to feel confident that the effort and resources expended on partnership development will be worth the gains achieved. This section provides leaders and managers with the business case for making the effort by showing that moving up to next highest state greatly reduces risk and improves performance.

We will describe the profile of each of the five cooperative states for partners and partnerships, and, through case studies for the first three states, show the difference in the ability of partners and partnerships in each state to partner effectively, achieve results, transfer capacity, and adapt and learn.

These descriptions start with the Fragmented state and move up the ladder to the Inclusive state.

THE FRAGMENTED STATE



A Fragmented system is characterized by poor management and lack of coordination. Vision and mission are unclear or contested. Leadership is weak or split. Therefore, members pursue work based on either what they individually perceive to be the goals of the partnership or their own self-interest. In both cases, this results in sabotage, either conscious or unconscious; members work at cross-purposes as they improvise to accomplish anything at all.

Performance of Fragmented systems is extremely poor; systems have difficulty achieving outputs, and the cost for their limited achievements can be very high. In competitive environments, Fragmented systems will fail. Even in non-competitive environments, the poor performance in the Fragmented state creates a high risk of losing key stakeholder support, resulting in the need to reorganize the system or to close it down due to lack of results.

Fragmented Organizations as Partners

Fragmented organizations make terrible partners. Their unclear vision, weak leadership, lack of power center, and the ad hoc nature of their internal workings means that they are unable to make reliable organizational commitments. Other partners often hear different promises from different sections of the Fragmented partner. When Fragmented partners do appear to make a commitment, they are unable to follow up on that commitment because, behind the scenes, not all parts of the organization have actually agreed to the commitment; therefore, the commitment will be sabotaged. With Fragmented partners, all commitments will be ad hoc agreements with individuals within the Fragmented partner.

For organizations in higher states, partnering with an organization in the Fragmented state is like negotiating with Jell-O, and leads to high levels of frustration since the *partnership* will be stuck in the Fragmented state (see Simple Rule 3: the cooperative capacity of a partnership cannot be higher than the lowest cooperative capacity of any of the partners).

Characteristics of Partners in the **Fragmented State**Case Study: A Fragmented Partner

ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENT	CHARACTERISTICS
Vision & Mission	Vision and mission are unclear or contested
Governance	Conflict of interest in the governance structure and little or no oversight
Leadership	Leadership is unclear, divided, or constantly changing
Management & Systems	Management is ad hoc and inconsistent, and systems, if they exist, are not adhered to Decisions are negotiated based on each individual's goals and political power
People & Culture	A culture of intentional or unintentional saboteurs Due to ad-hoc nature of management, it is not possible to accurately assess staff performance
Communication & Knowledge Management	Internal and external communications are ad hoc and inconsistent Knowledge held informally and scattered throughout the partnership
Monitoring & Evaluation	None
Stakeholder Relations	Terrible – stakeholders are unable make solid agreements
Performance	Poor – unable to make or follow through on commitments

CCP has had extensive experience facilitating partnerships in which a key partner was in the Fragmented state.

In the following case, Partner F's fragmentation was evident from its structure and lack of vision and mission. Partner F's leadership was structurally shared among three officers who were seldom on the same page as to project direction and priorities. In addition, two other staff held veto power over all program activities, giving them immense informal power without managerial accountability.

Within this group of senior managers, there were at least three informal operational versions of the program's vision and mission. The leadership were not consciously aware of these differences, and thus were handing down conflicting decisions to the project staff and partners based on different versions of the vision and mission. The result was unconscious sabotage and gridlock.

Another result of the lack of unity among senior staff was that they had not been able to agree on and establish internal management systems; all their internal systems—planning, financial, and monitoring and evaluation systems—were in disarray. All communication and decision-making were ad hoc.

This situation led to the following complaints from the partners of Partner F:

- Confusion over who was accountable for the partnerships within Partner F
- Confusion over who was the contact person for the partnerships within Partner F
- Poor information flows and coordination between the partners
- Difficulty in joint problem solving by the partnership
- Inefficient and slow negotiations of partnership contracts and contract variations on the part of Partner F
- Inability to follow through on commitments apparently made by partner F

Each of these issues was directly related to the fact that Partner F was in the Fragmented state.

First, Partner F was itself not clear who in the chain of command had management and negotiation responsibility for their partnerships. This meant that negotiating partnership agreements needed ad hoc meetings among the leadership group. At best, this led to great difficulties and many delays in finalizing any form of contract or agreement. At worst, part of the leadership would move ahead without consulting the other members of the leadership team. This would result in agreements being cancelled or amended as those who were initially excluded responded after the fact. This problem became so acute that field staff refused to implement decisions until they were *absolutely positive* that the decision would not be rescinded or changed (which is a form of sabotage consistent with the Fragmented state).

Second, the ad hoc approach to communication and knowledge management within Partner F meant that it could not effectively communicate internally. Decisions did not pass down the chain of command and information from the field did not move up the chain of command. In general, because information within Partner F resided only informally with individuals throughout the organization, Partner F was unable to systemically and accurately communicate partnership agreements to its staff, or partnership issues and progress to its partners.

The result was that Partner F was unable to effectively participate in any partnerships. The situation became so bad that its formal partners were on the verge of pulling out, and local agencies and villages no longer wanted to work with the project. The fragmentation of Partner F had fragmented the project's partnership system. The partnership system map below shows the impact of Partner F's fragmentation at both the national and field level.

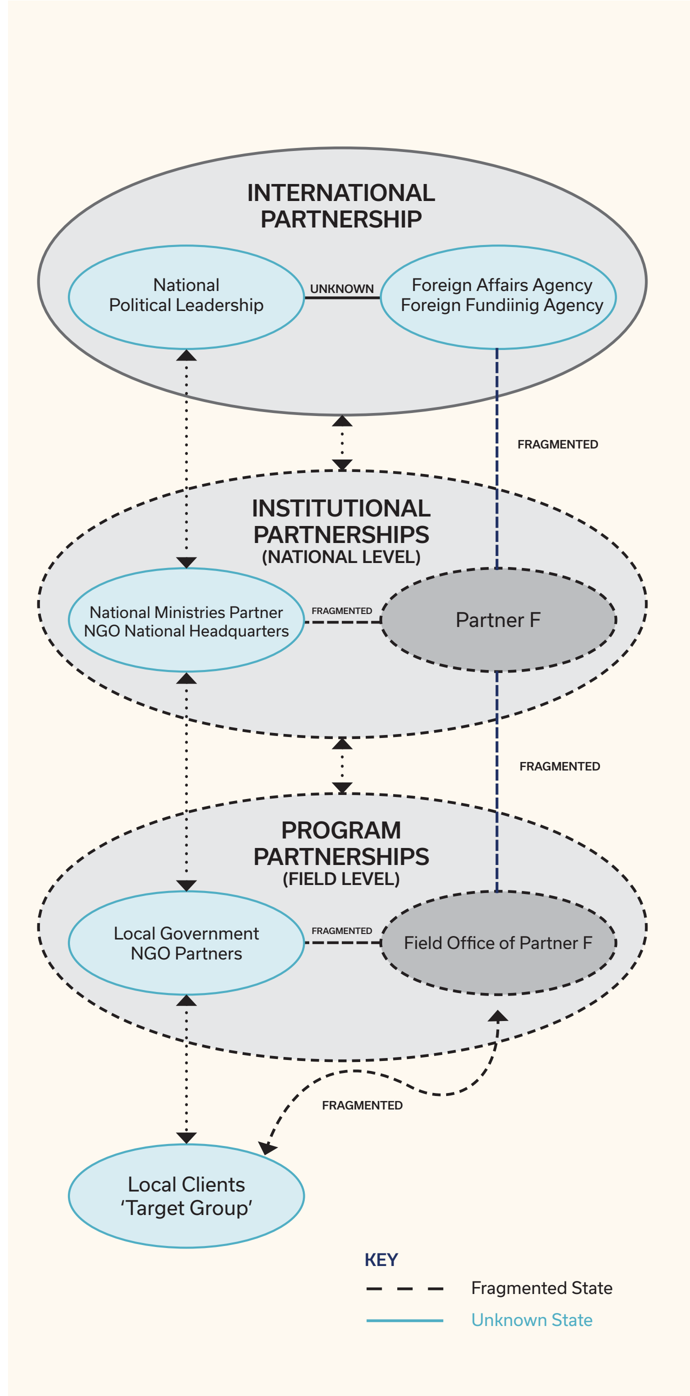
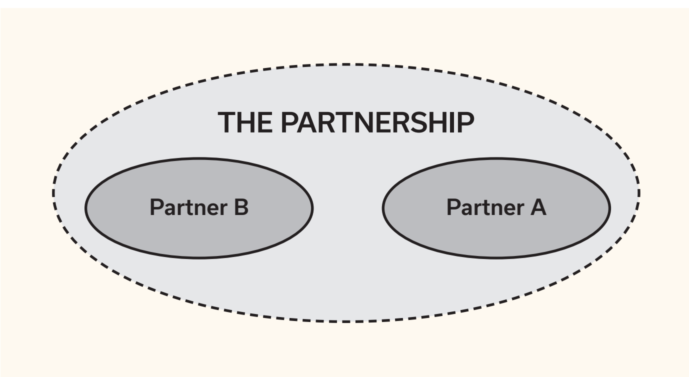


Figure 5: Fragmented Partnership System of Partner F

Figure 5 shows that all the partnerships and relationships of Partner F were in the Fragmented State (see Simple Rule 3). Due to the poor performance of Partner F, the foreign funding agency had begun the process of documenting reasons for closing down the project. At the national levels, the national ministries partnered with the project were highly frustrated with its lack of outputs. And at the field level, local partners had stopped inviting Partner F to participate in activities that were core to Partner F's work. In addition, some of the local village had stopped working with the project, and others were confused or angry about what they thought the project was doing. At this point in the project's life, Partner F had become isolated and was on life support.[5]

This case demonstrates the inability of Fragmented organizations to partner effectively. All of the Fragmented relationships described above and shown in Figure 5 were due to Partner F's own fragmentation. This is also clear demonstration of Simple Rule 3, that the cooperative capacity of a partnership cannot be higher than the lowest cooperative capacity of any of the partners.

Fragmented Partnerships



Fragmented partnerships are likewise ineffective. Their lack of vision and mission, lack of leadership, and ad hoc systems prevent the partners from coming together and actually working for the interest of the partnership. If performance is not a priority, these types of partnerships may survive. However, where performance is necessary, Fragmented partnerships will generally fail to meet the needs of the partners or the needs of the partnership's stakeholders. In these cases, the partnership will face either reorganization or closure.

Characteristics of Partners in the **Fragmented State**

PARTNERSHIP ELEMENT	CHARACTERISTICS
Vision & Mission	Lack of shared vision, mission, or exit strategy within the partnership
Governance	None or ineffective Resource commitment is ad hoc
Leadership	Divided or contested
Management & Systems	Agreed-upon decision-making mechanisms are not defined or are contested, and are therefore, management is ad hoc
People & Culture	A culture of intentional or unintentional saboteurs
Communication & Knowledge Management	Communication systems are ad hoc Knowledge is held informally and scattered throughout the partnership
Monitoring & Evaluation	None
Stakeholder Relations	Stakeholders are unclear of mission and dissatisfied with implementation
Performance	Poor – only able to achieve a scattering of outputs

Partnerships always start out in the Fragmented state, because they have only begun to form. They are Fragmented during the period when each partner assesses the desirability of committing to work together and through the period of partnership negotiations. Partnerships are only able to move into the Top-down state when they develop clear vision, mission, strategies, structure, and systems, and then empower a single party to ensure compliance to those structure and systems (see the following section, on Top-down partnerships).

[5] Before being closed down, however, Partner F conducted a turn-around effort and moved into the Top-down state. By the end of the project, it had re-established good relations with local partners and achieved its contracted outputs.

Case Study: Fragmented Partnership

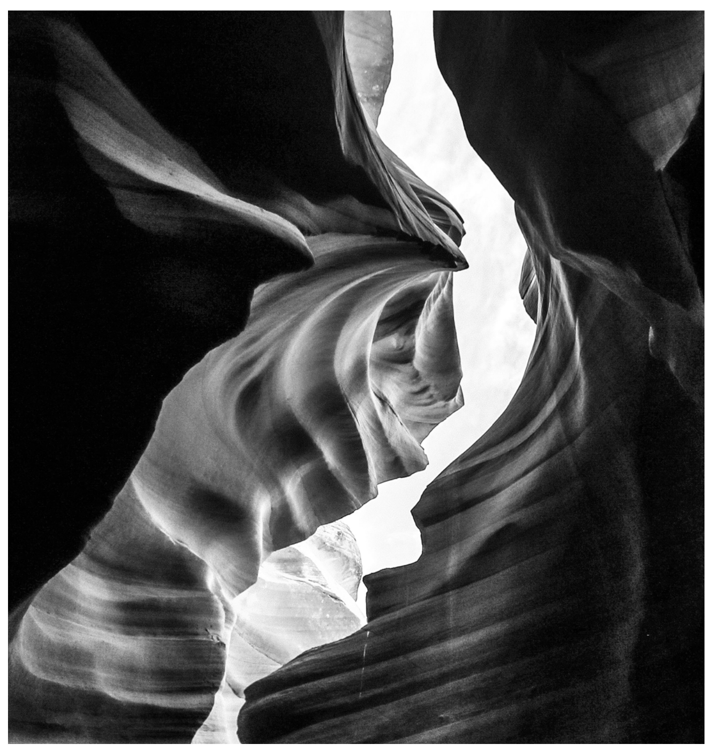
To see the results of Fragmented partnerships in action, Keith Bezanson and Paul Isenman provide eleven short case studies of global partnerships. In the CGD Policy Paper, "Governance of Global Partnerships: Challenges, Weaknesses and Lessons", they review evaluations of eleven multi-stakeholder global partnerships. Each of these partnerships was designed to bring together a broad range of constituents, including NGOs, national governments, and bilateral and multilateral donors in order to mobilize resources and improve development responses.

The common theme for most of these partnerships was the desire to be all-encompassing—to give voice to as many constituents as possible. This resulted in fragmentation for at least two reasons.

First, these partnerships were often, due to the broad range of their membership, unable to agree on a clear vision and mission. For example, Bezanson and Isenman report that an independent evaluation of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) found that, "Expectations of the different constituencies that comprised the new partnership were at fundamental variance from the outset and the differences were never addressed" (page 8). In another example, they recount an independent evaluation of The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) that found that, "Board discussions on money are compromised by the presence of recipients who openly lobby for their region or group" (page 10).

Second, many of these partnerships initially created large and complex governing bodies in order to include all of their constituents. Some of the boards of these partnerships included up to forty members, and other partnerships had up to four separate boards or management committees. These organizational designs split leadership and divided responsibility. For example, Bezanson and Isenman report that an evaluation of the Global Water Partnership (GWP) "found that 'the overly complex partnership governance arrangements reduced accountability [and that]... the range of divergent interests on the Steering Committee made this a very weak body, unable to set strategic directions or oversee management effectively'" (page 15).

Overall, Bezanson and Isenman found that ten out of the eleven partnerships experienced failed governance. The indicators they chose to describe failed governance are mixed, variable, and difficult to generalize, but the cooperative capacity framework addresses this problem. In the table below, we show how the elements or symptoms of the bad governance reported by Bezanson and Isenman correlate to the measures of the Fragmented cooperative state (described above). The left column indicates the KPI; the next column describes the symptom and number of times reported by Bezanson and Isenman; the right columns show the cooperative capacity framework's measure of that symptom and corresponding cooperative capacity state.



KPI	BEZANSON AND EISENMAN'S SYMPTOM OF POOR GOVERNANCE	COOPERATIVE CAPACITY MEASURE	COOPERATIVE CAPACITY STATE
Vision and Mission	No developed strategy or unified work plan – 6 cases	Contested or unclear vision and mission	Fragmented
	Disagreements between constituents, particularly between donors and non-donors regarding the purpose of the partnerships – 5 cases		
Governance	Cases of conflict of interests between members and partnerships – 4 cases	Conflict of interest	Fragmented
	Corruption and fraud – 1 case		Fragmented
	Insufficient resources or inefficient use of resources (high costs) – 4 cases	Ad hoc resource commitment	Fragmented
Leadership	Rapidly rotating leadership – 2 cases[6]	Ill-defined, contested, or constantly changing leadership and decision-making mechanisms	Fragmented
	Problems with decision making – 1 case		
	Confusions around roles and responsibilities within the partnerships – 5 cases		
Management Systems	Commitments not being carried through – 2 cases	Ad hoc management and communication systems	Fragmented
	No accountability systems to enforce agreements – 8 cases		
People and Culture	Focus on micro-activities or members' interest at expense of (usually unclear) strategic approaches – 4 cases	A culture of intentional or unintentional sabotage	Fragmented
	Constituents act in own self-interest over interest of partnerships – 2 cases		
Communications and Knowledge Management	No examples reported		
Monitoring and Evaluation	Weak monitoring and evaluation – 2 cases	Disorganized M&E and ad hoc measurements	Fragmented
	No evidence, or inability to demonstrate, any added value of the partnership – 4 cases		
Stakeholder Relations	Highly unsatisfied stakeholders – 10 cases	Stakeholders are unclear of mission and dissatisfied with implementation	Fragmented

[6] Simple Rule 4: Bringing a new member into a group temporarily returns it to the Fragmented state.

Each of the ten failed partnerships had at least three examples of the symptoms described above—symptoms determined to be debilitating enough to explicitly mention in the authors' synopsis of evaluations. The fact that each partnership suffered a number of these symptoms (measures) characteristic of the Fragmented state indicates that each of these failed partnerships was in the Fragmented state.

Because Bezanson and Isenman were focusing on governance issues, their reporting of programmatic results is incomplete (a common issue in management writing). The results that were reported include:

- One partnership collapsed and remained dysfunctional
- At least two partnerships were unable to increase collaboration among its members
- At least two partnerships were unable to offer the level and quality of hoped-for support
- In ten out of the eleven partnerships, the partnerships did not provide, or could not measure, any value added from the partnerships

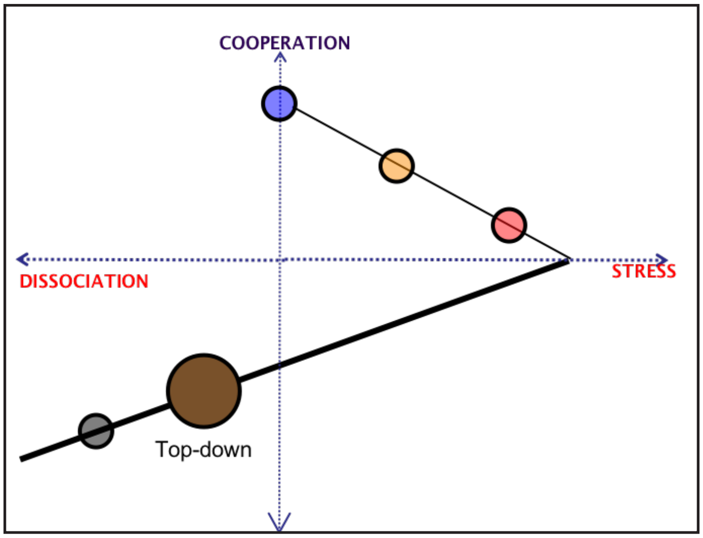
The management response to the poor evaluation results of these partnerships confirm the dangers of partnerships getting "stuck" in the Fragmented state. Due to their suspected poor performance (since they were not able to document added value), seven out of the ten experienced restructuring and strategic reorientation; one remained dysfunctional; and two did not respond to the recommendations of their evaluators.

These are the expected levels of performance of partnerships in the Fragmented state: very low performance and high stakeholder dissatisfaction, leading to dissolution or restructuring.

Bezanson and Isenman's descriptions of these multi-stakeholder global partnerships show that the ten failed partnerships were in the Fragmented state. As is characteristic of this state, none of the ten partnerships were able to be responsive to their members, transfer capacity, innovate, adapt, or learn while in the Fragmented state. Performance of these partnerships was poor, so poor that the survival of each the partnerships was threatened, forcing most of them to face restructuring and implement a turnaround process.

According to the CCP framework, improving a partner or partnership in the Fragmented state requires moving into the Top-down state. The next section describes the Top-down state and provides cases showing both the positive and negative aspects of Top-down.

THE TOP-DOWN STATE



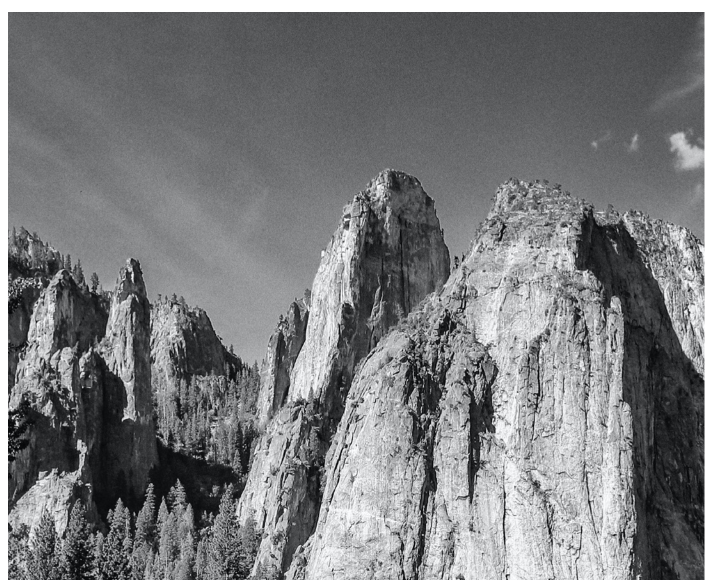
On the positive side, the Top-down state adds a "spine" to the ad hoc improvisation that is the Fragmented state. In Top-down, the "top" holds the vision and mission and directs implementation either through direct orders, well-defined systems, or both. It is in Top-down where systems form, and team members learn discipline. This is a vast improvement from the adhocracy of the Fragmented state. Top-down systems are able to consistently and efficiently conduct activities and achieve outputs. Moreover, well-managed Top-down systems put in place the vision, mission, strategies, and structures necessary for cooperation. Paradoxically, the move to the Inclusive state starts as a Top-down order to 'be inclusive'.

The downside of becoming stuck in Top-down is that systems can become bureaucratic and lack the flexibility to respond to internal and external changes. In the Top-down state, members obey or follow the lead of leadership or the dominant partner. Those not in a leadership role do what they are told, follow the systems in place, avoid risk, and, as best they can, keep leadership or the dominant partner happy. Only positive information is conveyed to the top; criticism and bad news is minimized and distorted as it moves up the chain of command or is withheld altogether.

Performance in the Top-down state is weak. It is able to produce outputs, and is a stable state when funding and resources are assured. However, the combination of passivity and inaccurate information reaching the top leads to sluggish, risk averse organizations that cannot meet the exact needs of their constituents. In competitive environments, Top-down is neither stable nor sustainable, being unable to keep up with more cooperative competitors.

TOP-DOWN ORGANIZATIONS AS PARTNERS

Top-down partners are unable to form collaborative partnerships. Due to their hierarchical culture, Top-down organizations only feel comfortable either being the dominant decision-making partner, or the subordinate follower. The inability of information to flow up the hierarchy prevents Top-down organizations from establishing two-way collaborative partnerships. Partnerships will only be managed from the top level. Lower staff, being risk averse, will only participate in the partnership as directed by the leader, and will not risk independent contributions to the partnership.



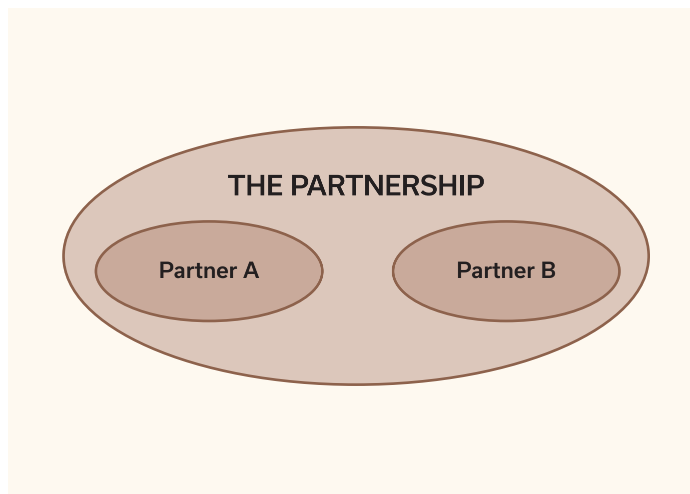
Characteristics of Partners in the Top-down State

ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENT	CHARACTERISTICS
Vision & Mission	Vision, mission, and strategies are held by leadership The workgroup knows the vision and mission
Governance	Governance is dominated by one stakeholder Governing body has empowered leadership to achieve the vision and mission
Leadership	A strong, empowered leader holds the vision, mission, and strategies and leads by command Initiative or criticism of leader by members is discouraged
Management & Systems	Management and systems are Top-down, clear, and rigid The chain of command and systems must be followed whether or not efficient or effective
People & Culture	A culture of bystanders, risk averse and passive Obedience to the chain of command, protocols, and agreements is valued System members do not initiate solutions without guidance and permission
Communication & Knowledge Management	Communication flows from top to bottom; negative information does not flow up the chain of command to leadership Effective communication within a partnership will only be with the leader
Monitoring & Evaluation	Only inputs and activities are monitored
Stakeholder Relations	The system is unresponsive to stakeholders Stakeholders understand the vision, but are often dissatisfied, and want more details or results
Performance	Able to achieve outputs as assigned by leadership

Organizations in higher states find it difficult to partner with Top-down partners due to their rigidity. A key aspect of partners in higher cooperative capacity states is that they move decision-making authority further down the chain of command. However, in Top-down systems, decision making is invested in the leader; those down the chain of command must follow established procedure and wait for the leader's decision before acting. This difference in management style can create great amounts of frustration for the partners in higher cooperative states, as they are not used to the sluggish decision making inherent in Top-down systems.

Top-down partners, when they are in the dominant position in a partnership, will generally focus on their own goals regardless of the goals of other partners. They require the other partners to adopt and adhere to their systems and practices (for example, planning, financial, and M&E systems), which are designed to only meet the needs of the dominant partner. They will be unresponsive to feedback or needs of other partners.

TOP-DOWN PARTNERSHIPS



Top-down partnerships form when (assuming all partners are in at least the Top-down state) a Fragmented partnership moves up due to the partners agreeing on the partnership's vision and mission, empowering one of the partners as a strong leader, instituting a clear structure and defined processes, and compelling all staff in all partners to do their jobs and follow processes as defined.

Top-down partnerships are poor at promoting sustainability and capacity transfer. Sustainable continuation of outputs and results are unlikely because, during the life of the partnership, they depend on the dominant partner. If and when the dominant partner leaves the partnership, it will take with it its resources, skills, and management systems, leaving the non-dominant partner(s) unable to continue the activities of the partnership. Capacity building is weak for a similar problem. Generally, the dominant partner maintains control of the resources and activities, thereby ensuring that new skills and systems are not transferred to the non-dominant partner(s).

Characteristics of Partners in the Top-down State

PARTNERSHIP ELEMENT	CHARACTERISTICS
Vision & Mission	Mission, vision, and strategy are held by a dominant partner or managing body and are uncontested by the other partner(s)
Governance	There is one dominant partner or managing body Asymmetrical sharing of resources, with more (almost always) coming from the dominant partner
Leadership	The dominant partner or managing unit provides the leadership and drive of the partnership
Management & Systems	The dominant partner or management body mandates management systems and enforces compliance
People & Culture	The non-dominant partner(s) are risk averse, passive, and acquiesce to the dominant partner
Communication & Knowledge Management	Communication flows are one way, from the dominant partner to the others Feedback from the other partners is not heard by the dominant partner
Monitoring & Evaluation	Inputs, activities, and outputs are monitored by the dominant partner
Stakeholder Relations	Stakeholders understand vision but feel ignored by the implementation process
Performance	Able to achieve outputs as assigned by the dominant partner High probability that any results achieved are unsustainable

If capacity building is attempted, it will be thwarted by two factors. First, due to lack of two-way communication, the content of the capacity transfer will reflect what the dominant partner thinks is necessary, not the actual needs of the subordinate partners. Second, Top-down partnerships do not generate the enthusiasm and readiness on the part of non-dominant partner(s) necessary for them to first learn and then take up ownership of the partnership's program. These factors mean that most activities and almost all capacity development initiated by a Top-down partnership will not continue after the partnership ends.

Top-down partnerships will succeed at achieving outputs as directed by the dominant partner, which leads to a great increase in performance over a Fragmented partnership. But the dominant partner's control of decision making, and the one-way, top-down flow of communications prevents Top-down partnerships from responding effectively to their partners or benefiting from the knowledge, skills, or resources the non-dominant partners bring to the partnership.

CASE STUDY: THE UPSIDE OF TOP-DOWN PARTNERSHIPS

To look at the benefits of Top-down, we return to Bezanson and Isenman. In their review of multi-stakeholder global partnerships, they found one partnership that received consistent positive evaluations of its governance and clear evidence of value added by the partnership over mainstream development organizations with the same goals and mission.

What is clear from Bezanson and Isenman's description of this partnership is that it had moved into at least Top-down, and potentially to a more collaborative state. The partnership was able to move out of the Fragmented state because its larger multi-stakeholder body empowered and delegated to two small groups—whose members were mainly technical and professional specialists—the responsibility of managing the work of the partnership and exercising fiduciary responsibilities (page 20). Bezanson and Isenman report that in the successful partnership.

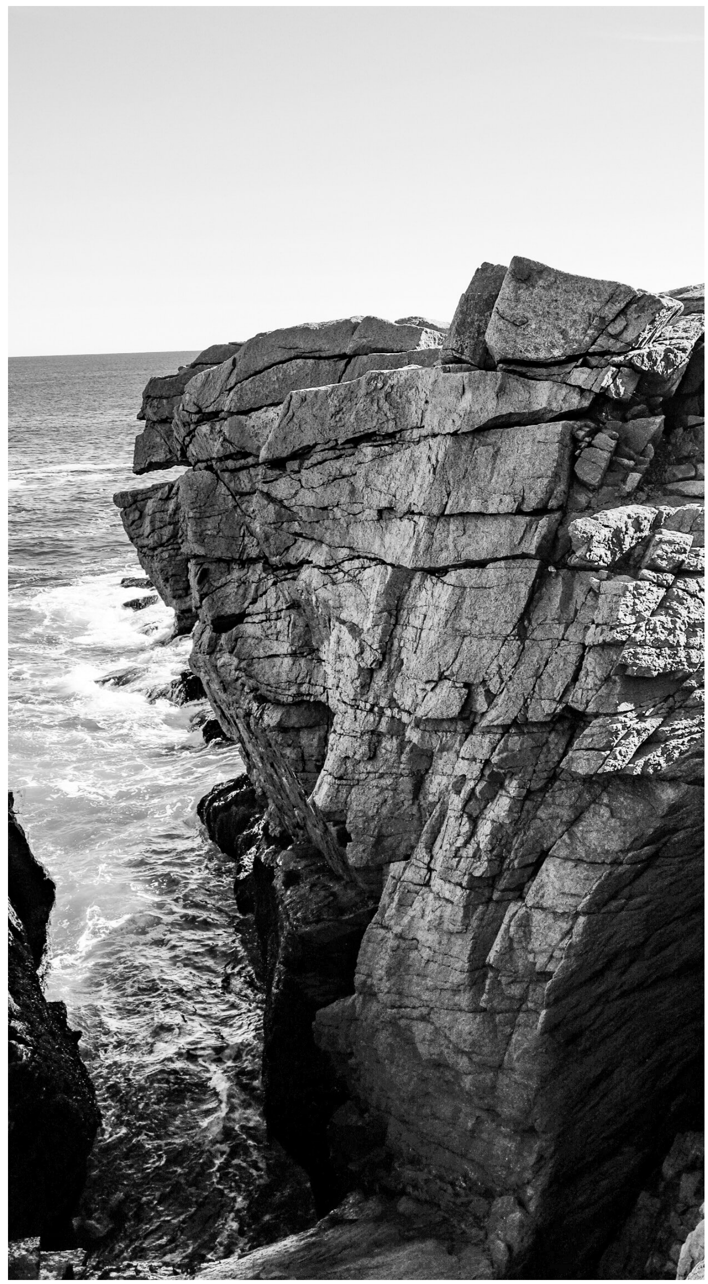
- "The governance structure provided sound strategic, policy, and operational guidance to the [partnership]" (page 20)
- The larger governing body included generalists who stayed out of day-to-day operations and which empowered small groups made up of technical and professional specialists to implement strategy, policy decision-making, and the exercise of fiduciary responsibilities
- The roles of the three bodies managing the partnership—the multi-stakeholder body, the executive committee, and the investment committee— were clear
- The executive committee was a small group (9 members), made up of technical experts who were empowered to manage the partnerships activities
- The investment committee was also small (11 members) and made up of technical experts who provided fiduciary oversight

See page 26 for the table how these attributes correlate with the Top-down state.

The result of moving into at least the Top-down state was that, according to the evaluation reviewed by Bezanson and Isenman, "there was *clear evidence that the [partnership] demonstrated valued added* over [other mainstream institutions tackling the partnership's issue]" [emphasis added] (page 20).

In addition, the governance structure had gained strong legitimacy among the partners and promoted effective participation (a potential indicator of a higher state) from almost all the major stakeholders (page 17). This could not have happened in the adhocracy of Fragmented. It only begins to take place in Top-down with the imposition of organizational order based on, as in this case demonstrates, clear vision, mission, and operational guidance.

As this was the only partnership which was able to demonstrate value added, it is clear the overall result is a level of performance far greater than the lower levels of performance demonstrated by the partnerships in the Fragmented state.



The table below shows how these attributes correlate with the Top-down state:

KPI	BEZANSON AND EISENMAN'S SYMPTOM OF POOR GOVERNANCE	COOPERATIVE CAPACITY MEASURE	COOPERATIVE CAPACITY STATE
Vision and Mission	"The governance provided sound strategic [and] policy… guidance… " (page 20)	Mission and vision held by the management body and uncontested by other partners	Top-down
Governance	"…relative lack of friction within the multi-stakeholder partnership over the role of the World Bank as host, a role stronger than that in [other partnerships in the review]" (page 20) The larger body that included generalists, **delegated strategy, policy decision-making, and exercise of fiduciary responsibilities to small groups** made up of technical and professional specialists (page 20)	One dominant partner or managing body	Top-down
Leadership	The executive committee was a small group (9 members) made up of technical experts who were empowered to act The director/CEO of [the partnership] was appointed by the World Bank	One dominant partner or management unit that provides leadership and drives the partnership	Top-down
Management Systems	The roles of the three bodies managing the partnership were clear "The governance provided sound … and operational guidance …" (page 20)	The dominant partner or management body mandates management systems, and enforces compliance	Top-down
Monitoring and Evaluation	The investment committee was also small (11 members), and made up of technical experts who provided fiduciary oversight	Organized M&E; measurements are of tasks performed.	Top-down
Stakeholder Relations	"The governance structure had gained strong legitimacy… [with] almost all major stakeholders…" (page 20)	Understand vision & mission – pleased enough to want to keep working together	Inclusive

CASE STUDY: THE DOWNSIDE OF TOP-DOWN PARTNERSHIPS

An extreme, but not uncommon, result of a Top-down relationship with a dominant Top-down organization is described by Lauren Dodds and Mike Klassen in "Targets or Results: A Case Study on Project Learning". The project the authors describe was an agriculture development project in which commercial farmers would provide tractor services and other inputs on credit to smallholders in order to increase production and income; payments for the services and inputs were to be made in kind at harvest. The partnership discussed here is the partnership between the project implementer and the donor.

The early stages of the project met with success. But as the project progressed, smallholder repayment became a problem. Project discussions with the commercial and smallholder farmers found that both actors had become overextended; the commercial farmers were providing services and inputs to more farmers than they could monitor, and the smallholders were farming more land than they could manage. The results were poor yields and the inability of the smallholders to make their payments. As the case study points out, "The compounding result was a lose-lose situation: both the business [commercial farmers] and out growers [smallholders] had low profits" (page 1).

The solution the field staff and one commercial farmer agreed to try was to scale back the lending and limit the amount of smallholder land plowed and provided for. The following season, the commercial farmer scaled back from serving 3,000 smallholders to serving 1,000 smallholders. The result was higher yields and incomes for the farmers and over 95% repayment for the commercial farmer. This was a win-win for both actors (page 1).

It is important to note here that the relationship between the farmers and implementer appears to be in one of the collaborative states. The implementing team heard the problems and issues being faced by farmers in the field and responded. Moreover, at least one farm was involved in determining a solution.

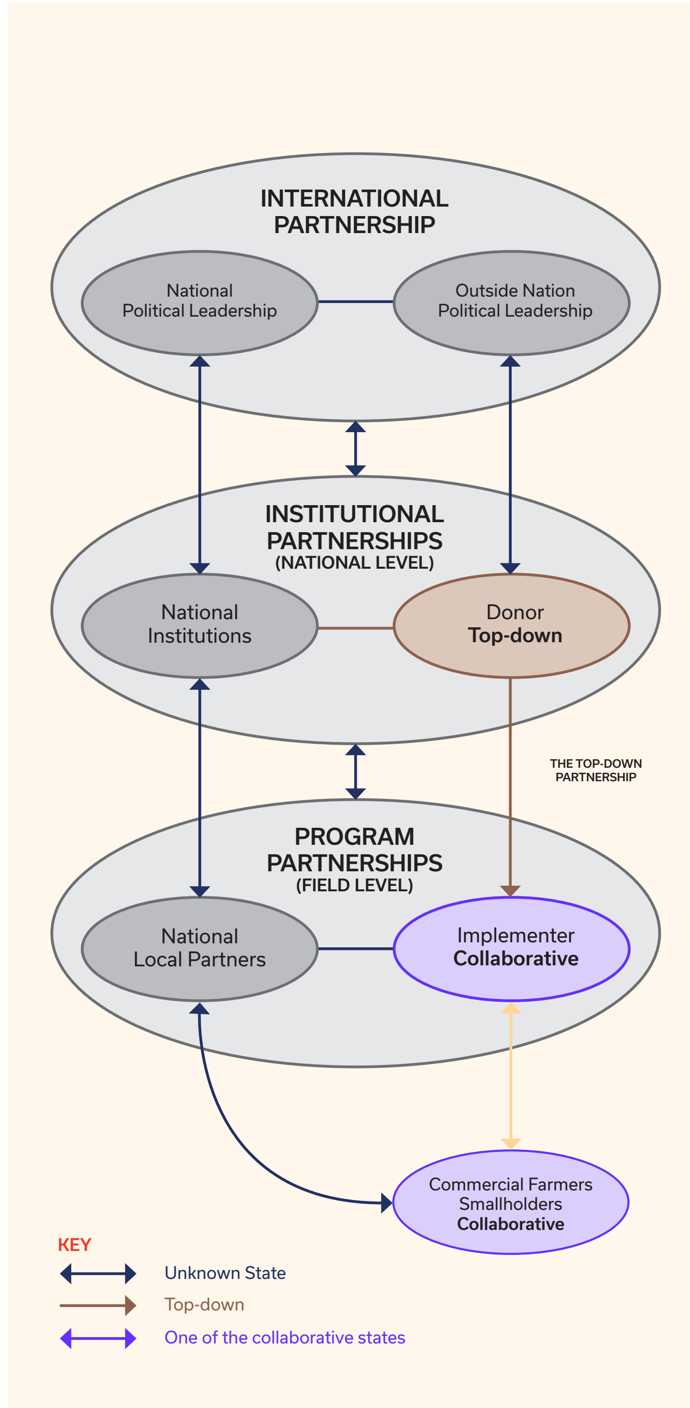


Figure 6: A Top-Down Partnership in the Partnership System

However, when this solution was proposed to the donor, it was rejected for going "against what the project was 'trying to achieve'" (page 1). The donor continued to assume that extensification was the path to greater returns, even in the face of hard evidence to the contrary, and refused to adjust the high target numbers for farmers and acreage the project was required to reach. This left the project to struggle to meet project output targets that did not achieve the desired results in the field.

This set of relationships can be mapped out using the generic partnership map as shown in Figure 6 to the right. The map shows the whole system; the colored agencies and connecting line show the relationships described in the case study. The greyed-out agencies represent other stakeholders, for whom there is no data on their cooperative or partnership states.

The map illustrates that since the implementer and recipients were able to develop an alternative approach that fit the reality in the field, they most likely had a partnership that was in one of the collaborative states (Inclusive or higher); such collaborative problem solving does not happen in Top-down relationships. That was clearly seen when the implementer approached the donor with the solution. It was rejected as it did not conform with the contract or expectations of the donor. The donor, a Top-down partner, enforced the standing agreement and was not willing to respond to its partner: a clear indication of a Top-down partnership.

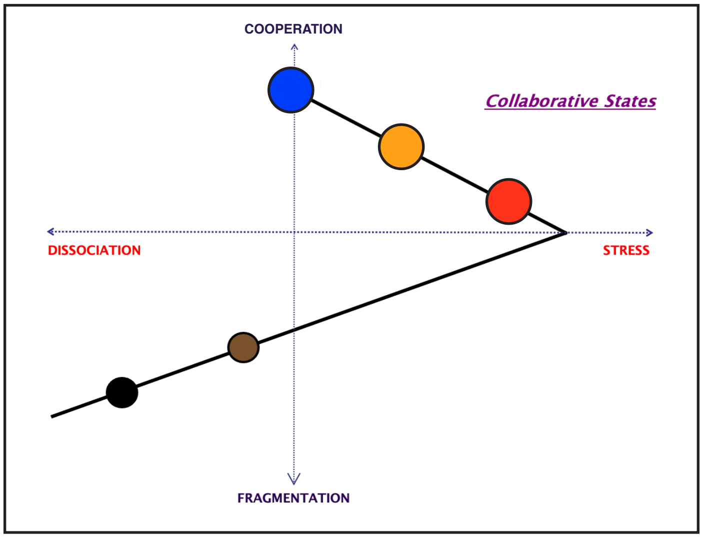
In addition, the map shows a potential block for scaling the project. The Top-down relationship between the donor and the implementer prevents lessons learned in the field from reaching the donor at the national level. Thus, these lessons can neither be scaled by the donor, nor transferred to other national-level partners to be applied at a greater scale.

This example does not allow us to compare the results between a Fragmented partnership and a Top-down partnership, but it does show us the potential differences between a Top-down and Inclusive partnership. If the partnership between donor and implementer stays in Top-down, the project may succeed in reaching the targets for numbers of smallholders and acreage served as set by the donor; however, it will fail to achieve the goals of sustainably increasing smallholder yields and incomes due to low repayment rates and the eventual abandonment of the program by the commercial farmers.

On the other hand, could the donor-implementer partnership move into the Inclusive state, it would be much easier and likelier for the system to adjust based on field experience. If the system were able to make the adjustments demonstrated by its field people, there would be a greater likelihood of achieving a sustainable, win-win approach for increasing yields and incomes for smallholder farmers, albeit potentially fewer than originally envisioned. In this case, it is possible to make the case that moving the partnership from Top-down to Inclusive would improve its results substantially, from a non-sustainable extensive program to a sustainable intensive program.

This case study exemplifies our observation that Top-down partnerships have great difficulty in responding to unexpected situations and innovating and adapting to lessons learned by non-dominant partners. It also shows that while Top-down partners are able to achieve outputs, but due to inability to learn, those outputs may not be appropriate for the situation.

THE COLLABORATIVE STATES

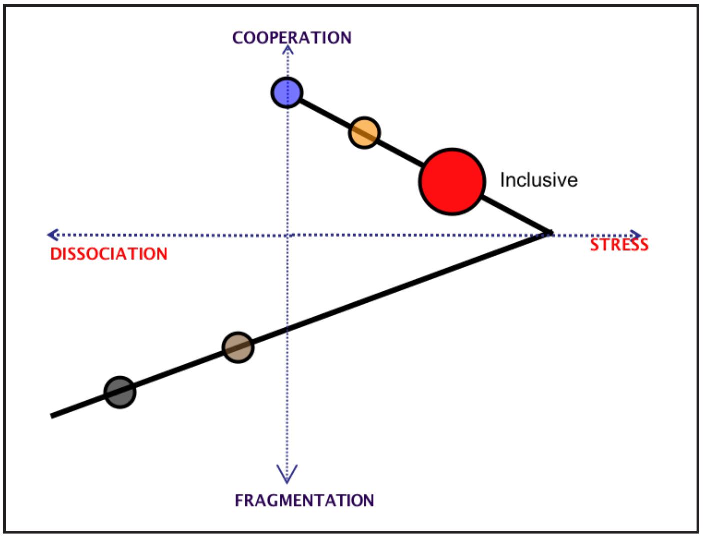


The collaborative states are a jump upward from the dissociated states. In the collaborative states, the partners make the leap to become truly invested in the vision, mission, and strategy, and increasingly share power within the partnership. The CCP model identifies and defines three collaborative states: **Inclusive, Accountable,** and **Integrated.**

These three states are seldom found in partnerships in development, largely for two reasons. First, the key actors in development, aid agencies and local governments, tend to be Top-down bureaucracies, and thus unable to develop collaborative partnerships. Second, the short lifespan of many projects means that the project units themselves rarely reach the higher collaborative states, particularly the Accountable and Integrated states. As a result, we were not able to find case studies in the literature that described partnerships in any of the collaborative states.

Therefore, our descriptions of the collaborative states will provide only two case studies, a partnership in the Inclusive state (below) and a partner in the Accountable state (in the next section), both drawn from our experience managing a child nutrition program. The descriptions of the Accountable partnerships and Integrated states will consist of illustrating the model profiles and characteristics of those two highest states.

THE INCLUSIVE STATE



The Inclusive state is the first state where collaboration, both internally and externally, actually takes place. With the "spine" of clear vision and mission, and top-down management systems in place, three key things are able to happen. First, members of the system are able to connect to the vision, mission, and strategy and begin to align their actions with the shared purpose. Second, communication begins to flow up from the 'bottom' of the system. And finally, leadership is able to start sharing power, delegating authority, resources, and responsibility down the chain of command in the system.

The upside of the Inclusive state is that the members of the system believe in the vision, mission, and strategies of the work; they can articulate them; and they come to own them. Now that all the members feel ownership of the strategies, they are able to, and are encouraged to, self-align their actions to implement them.

Communication flows change from top-down to include bottom-up and across member communications. All members, particularly the leadership, are required to accept critical feedback; bad news is invited, even demanded (as accurate information is necessary for decision making), and responded to constructively.

Next, leadership starts pushing responsibility for higher-level results (outcomes) down the system. In the Top-down state, those lower in the system are only responsible for activities and outputs. In the Inclusive state, leadership delegates authority and resources to those lower in the system, giving them more responsibility to achieve the vision, mission, and strategies. However, in the Inclusive state, strategic metrics may not have yet been completely developed, and performance may be measured more by 'direction' than achieving goals. That said, in the Inclusive state, inputs, outputs, and outcomes are measured.

Effective capacity transfer begins in the Inclusive state. For partners, the role of leadership begins to shift from direction-giver to coach and mentor, working with their subordinates to develop their capacity to take on new and heavier responsibilities. For partnerships, the dominant partner begins to share power with its partner(s). As will be discussed below, this increases the ability to transfer capacity and the likelihood of sustainable projects and programs.

There are two major downsides of the Inclusive state. One is that as members come to own the vision, mission, and strategies they may come to feel responsible for all of their implementation. Members concern themselves with all aspects of the operation, not just their part of it. This leads to a culture of "loyal complaint" where members now care enough about the vision, mission, and strategy to complain about actions of other parts of the system. This aspect of the Inclusive state leads to high organizational stress, as shown by being the most stressful state on the cooperative state ladder.

The other downside of the Inclusive state is that the systems developed in the Top-down state can no longer handle the new power and decision-making processes (inclusion and delegation) nor the new bottom-up communication flows. These new practices overwhelm the existing systems, and thus management systems and access to information become disorganized. In particular, information collection and dissemination channels remain in flux in this state.

Performance in the Inclusive state is a great improvement over Top-down.[7] As system members become invested in the vision and mission, their energy levels and excitement for the work increase dramatically, and they voluntarily work harder, smarter, and with more care than in Top-down. Moreover, with the delegation of responsibility for results to some of the system members, system productivity increases, being less constrained by the limits of leadership's ability to micromanage. Finally, with the initiation of an upward flow of information, the system is better able to respond effectively to its users, target groups, customers, and other stakeholders, thus creating more effective processes for capacity transfer and enhanced sustainability.

INCLUSIVE ORGANIZATIONS AS PARTNERS

Partners in the Inclusive state are markedly better partners than ones in the Top-down state due to their capacity to delegate and share decision making, accept and respond to critical feedback, and communicate with partners.

A great advantage for Inclusive partners is that leadership does not have to directly manage a partnership, as in Top-down. The management of and participation in a partnership can be delegated to an appropriate member or section of the partner. This means that members or sections with the appropriate skills, wherever they reside in the partner organization, can take responsibility for their part of the partnership. With dedicated staff empowered to manage the partnership and able to work collaboratively (as opposed to only the leader managing all partnerships as in Top-down), combined with bottom-up information flows, the ability to respond to the needs of their stakeholders, partners, and partnership is greatly increased over Top-down partners.

That said, for partners in cooperative capacity states higher than Inclusive, working with an Inclusive partner may be somewhat frustrating and require patience given the disorganization inherent in partners in this state.

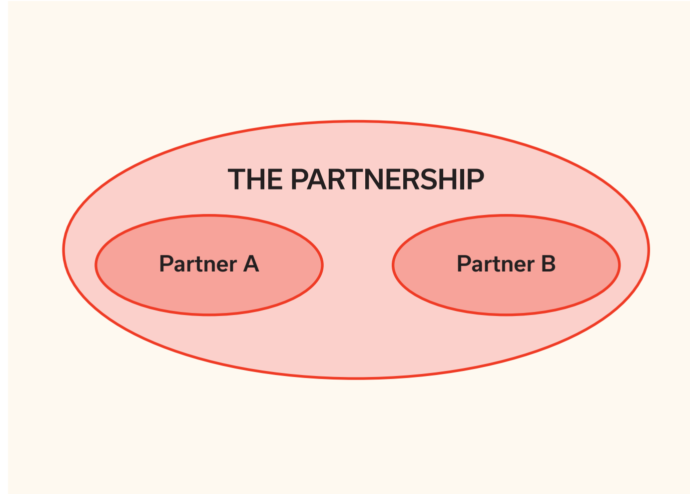
The ability of Inclusive partners to listen to and respond to partners also greatly increases their ability to effectively transfer capacity. Through listening and including other partners in all phases, from planning to implementation of capacity-building interventions, Inclusive partners can design customized systems to transfer capacity based on accurate information and in such a way that capacity-building interventions will be received by the receiving partner. This ability to effectively transfer capacity increases the likelihood of the continuation of project activities and benefits (sustainability) when time-bound outside-initiated projects end.

[7] At times it is possible that, with an enlightened director, with smaller organizations, a high-performing Top-down might perform better than a low-performing Inclusive, but the Top-down structure would not be sustainable. Its performance will sharply drop when the leader leaves, or as the size of the organization or its partnership ecosystem grows.

Characteristics of Partners in the Inclusive State

ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENT	CHARACTERISTICS
Vision & Mission	Staff are invested in vision and mission and know the strategies Strategies are aligned with vision and mission
Governance	Governance is shared – the governing board and stakeholders are integrated into strategic planning
Leadership	Leaders and leadership are inspirational Leaders invite feedback from below Leadership is shared and delegated down the chain of command
Management & Systems	Disorganized empowerment across the organization Responsibility becomes shared in the organization as responsibility for higher-level results (outcomes) are delegated down the chain of command; however, measurable metrics for these results may not yet exist or are not yet used Management and systems overwhelmed as information begins to flow up to leadership
People & Culture	A culture of loyal complaint Members grasp the whole of the vision, mission, and strategy, and embrace responsibility, but may lack all the skills necessary to implement them
Communication & Knowledge Management	Communication and information flow up and down, but in a disorganized manner Members have access to much of the information they need, but in a disorganized form Staff can communicate partnership needs
Monitoring & Evaluation	Inputs, outputs, and outcomes are monitored Staff have some ability to learn and innovate; innovation may be blocked by lack of systems
Stakeholder Relations	Stakeholders understand vision, mission, and strategy, and have channels to express feedback
Performance	Able to achieve outputs and some outcomes

INCLUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS



Inclusive partnerships are higher performing, more able to create sustainable (ongoing) projects, and have greater ability to transfer capacity among the partners than Top-down partnerships.

Partnership performance improves dramatically as responsibility and authority is delegated from the dominant partner. The work of the partnership becomes more distributed among the partners, and each partner puts more effort into the partnership. The non-dominant partners no longer acquiesce to the control of the dominant partner; rather, they start taking responsibility for their part of achieving the goals of the partnership.

Characteristics of Partnerships in the Inclusive State

PARTNERSHIP ELEMENT	CHARACTERISTICS
Vision & Mission	All members of the partnership share the vision, mission, and strategies Strategic directions are owned by all the partners and aligned with the vision and mission
Governance	Power is shared between the partners, though often asymmetrically Both partners are included in the planning process There is substantial investment of resources from both partners
Leadership	Leadership listens and responds to feedback from and needs of all partners
Management & Systems	Results are delegated among the partners; however, metrics are not yet established or not yet used Partners are required to listen to each other Management systems are undeveloped or overwhelmed as the partnership transitions to support two-way communication and delegation of results
People & Culture	Open communication and inclusion are valued Partnership effort to achieve vision and mission not highly disciplined
Communication & Knowledge Management	Partners have access to information in a disorganized manner Information flows up and down within and among partners
Monitoring & Evaluation	Inputs, outputs, and outcomes are monitored Innovation may be blocked by lack of systems
Stakeholder Relations	Stakeholders understand mission, vision, and strategy, and are included to some degree in the planning process
Performance	Able to achieve outputs and outcomes with potential for real sustainability

Sustainable continuation of project results is more likely because each partner is more able to share and respond to other partners' needs, delegate to the appropriate partner, and use the partner's management systems that are most consistent with the exit strategy. Thus, at the end of a project when one partner leaves the partnership, the other partners are able to continue their part of the work of the partnership because that work has been embedded into their regular management systems. The remaining partners do not have to scramble to replace a departing resources and management system.

Likewise, capacity building is more likely to succeed because the partners are required to listen and respond to the issues and needs of all other partners. In the Inclusive state, it is no longer acceptable for the dominant partner to dictate what the capacity building effort will be; both partners, the one providing capacity building and the other receiving it, are now required to communicate with each other their wants and needs, respond to their partner's wants and needs, and address each need in the capacity-building effort.

CASE STUDY: AN INCLUSIVE PARTNERSHIP

The following case study describes CCP's experience with a partnership between an international NGO implementing a child nutrition program and a local district health department.

The contract for the NGO's child nutrition program dictated that the program implement a number of activities and achieve set targets for improving the nutrition of children ages five and under. The exit plan was essentially a statement that local government agencies would take over the program's activities. No specifics for achieving this exit strategy were laid out in the contract.

The design and contractual requirements of the program prevented a collaborative implementation of the program. Neither time nor budget were available to develop a partnership with a local agency for joint implementation of program activities. Therefore, the program adopted the strategy of treating all its activities as demonstrations for local agencies. All of the program's activities were on offer, like a buffet, to any permanent local institution to choose the ones they would like to adopt.

The first agency to take the program up on this offer was a district health department. After a period of observing the program's activities, this district health department partnered with the nutrition program to a) learn how to implement the activities and b) incorporate the activities into their annual plans and budgets. This partnership eventually reached the Inclusive state. As stated above, in order to achieve an Inclusive partnership, both partners must be in one of the collaborative states. So, first, we will look at key characteristics that show that both organizations were in collaborative states, and then we will show that the partnership itself reached the Inclusive state and the results of that collaboration.

The history of the how the district health department engaged in the partnership strongly indicates that it was in, at least, the Inclusive state. As the program began implementing interventions to teach mothers child nutrition, the program invited the district health department to observe the programs activities. In response to these invitations, lower-level staff observed and participated in a number of activities, such as community-based workshops and trainings. These lower-level staff were impressed and gave positive reports to their superiors. Soon, higher-level staff were also visiting and observing the program's activities.

The higher-level staff were also impressed by the activities of the program, and could see that the program's approaches were more effective in reaching the community than those of the health department. As a result, they approached the program's project manager (not the program director) and asked to be taught how to implement the program's activities.

After this approach, the project manager of the nutrition program and division heads of the health department came together to plan and implement a process where the health department could test out and, if appropriate, adopt the nutrition program's activities.

In addition, one of the key startup activities of the nutrition program was a survey of child nutrition in the project area. This survey showed a level of under-nutrition in the area that was much higher than the official government statistics. At the time, this worried the nutrition program's staff, who, assuming a Top-down health department, were afraid that the health department would reject the program's findings. This did not happen; the health department actually acknowledged the weaknesses in their data collection, and acknowledged the program's data.

There are some very strong indicators in this chain of events that show that this health department was in the Inclusive state. The first was that information, even negative information, flowed up the chain of command. Subordinates reported to their superiors that the program's approaches looked to be more effective than the what the health department were using, and their superiors acted. This would not happen in a Top-down system; in a Top-down system, subordinates would tend not to make such reports, fearing any implied criticism of their organization.

Second, the negotiations to begin working together took place mostly between the program's project manager and senior health department staff, not between their bosses. If established systems were not in place for such negotiations, as was the case here, this would not happen in a Top-down organization. In Top-down, the leader would make the approach and negotiate the details of the partnership, and then delegate tasks to subordinates. In this case, the head of the health department and director of the program only met a couple of times to confirm what their subordinates had already collaboratively planned and were implementing. This arrangement in which subordinates are free to collaboratively plan and implement, without micromanagement from above, or well-defined bureaucratic systems, can only happen between two collaborative partners.

Third, the data collected by the program showed worse nutritional results than the official health department statistics; the health department not only accepted the data, but acknowledged weaknesses in their data collection system. A Top-down system would tend to ignore and or reject negative data such as this, and generally would not acknowledge systemic weaknesses.

All of these behaviors and responses are strong indicators that the health department was in the Inclusive state.

Regarding the nutrition program itself, by the latter part of the program's life, it had passed through the Fragmented, Top-down, and Inclusive states and had reached the Accountable state. The Accountable state will be described below, but briefly: The program had three strategies to achieve its overall goal, one of which was working directly with mothers to improve their children's nutrition.[8]

These were the activities the health department were interested piloting and adopting. Each strategy was delegated to a project manager under the supervision of the program manager. The project managers were accountable for developing their own action planning, budgeting, and implementation to meet measurable strategic goals and implement the exit strategy. The program director, who was not a technical expert, provided support where necessary and managed the coordination between the three strategies, particularly the distribution of resources and preventing overlapping activities. The delegation, clear strategic goals, and type of coordination done by the program director indicate the nutrition program had reach the Accountable state.

Thus, both partners were capable of building an Inclusive partnership, provided they could shepherd the partnership from its initial Fragmented state, through the Top-down state, and into the Inclusive state. And that is what happened.

The partnership started in the Fragmented state: This was the period in which the health department observed the program's activities, and then negotiated how to move forward with the program. During this phase, there was no common goal; that was worked out during negotiations.

The partnership moved into the Top-down state during the early phase of implementation. During this period, due to its practical expertise, the nutrition program took the lead as the dominant partner. The nutrition program staff explained their work, and conducted the first pilot activities themselves, with health department staff at first as observers, and then later as co-facilitators following the nutrition program's scripts. During this phase, the program staff also helped the department of health staff to assess how these activities could benefit the department of health.

During this Top-down phase, the nutrition program was working toward the goal of handing over these activities to the health department, but the health department had not yet made the commitment to incorporate the activities into their work.

The partnership moved into Inclusive when the health department committed to adopting the activities piloted by the nutrition program. At this point, both parties were committed to the goal of having the department of health learn, pilot, and adopt activities being carried out by the nutrition project.

Through a series of regularly scheduled meetings, strategies, roles, and an exit strategy emerged, and power and decision making became shared

[8] The other two were to reduce diarrhea (a major contributor to under-nutrition) and improve the services of local community health centers.

based on the expertise of each partner. This further established the partnership in the Inclusive state.

The nutrition program staff took the lead in training and mentoring the department of health staff in conducting activities. By this time, department of health staff were conducting activities themselves, with nutrition program staff as observers. From this process, the department of health staff gave feedback and the two partners worked together to customize the activities for the department of health.

The department of health staff took the lead in advocating for the adoption of the new activities to the district government and parliament. They understood the government systems and knew who to work with to get the activities adopted. The nutrition program staff supported this advocacy with assistance in creating budgets and providing technical data.

This process was managed through a series of meetings where actions were assessed, feedback from both sides was listened to, and adjustments to plans and activity designs were made. Other than these meetings, there were no formal management and information systems, nor were any formal, measurable, strategic goals set. According to the project manager, "the core values of their work were open communication, listening, and inclusion".[9]

The achievements grew out of the collaborative arrangement that developed as the partnership progressed.

Both partners provided resources, staff, time, and money to the partnership. The program provided staff and resources for training and consultation, and continued support for their activities within the project area. The health department also provided staff, time, and resources; in particular, they funded pilot activities outside of the nutrition program's project area.

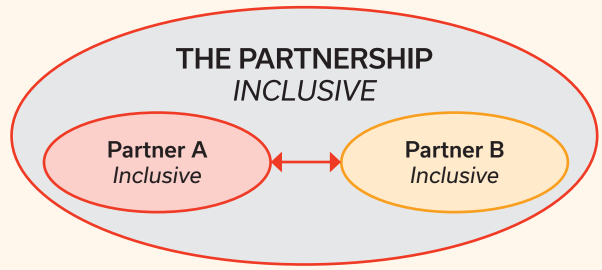


Figure 7: An Inclusive Partnership

Figure 7 shows the states of the partnership at its most developed. The partnership achieved in the Inclusive state by virtue of its shared vision, mission, strategy; shared power and decision making; shared leadership; the ability to share feedback; and use of under-developed management and information systems.

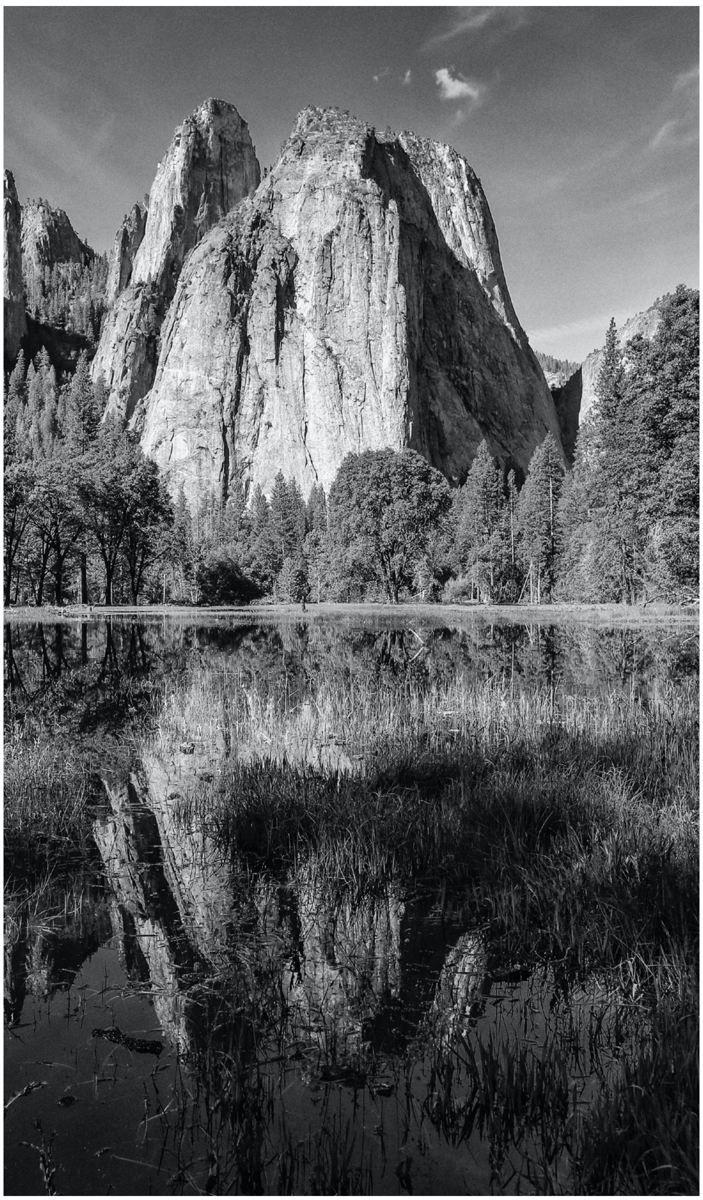
The final results of this partnership were substantial. First, the advocacy effort was successful; the activities were incorporated into the annual plans of the department of health, and awarded a budget of approximately $500,000.[10] Second, there was a sustainable transfer of capacity; the health department staff had mostly been trained in implementing the activities, and when the nutrition program closed down a year earlier than expected, the health department continued implementing the activities—going as far as hiring ex-program staff to ensure they had the skills and

[9] The department of health, at this time, was also participating in another training program run by a Top-down donor. When asked as to the difference between the two programs, a health department manager replied that while the material was good, the other project's approach was "kaku" (meaning stiff, rigid), while the nutrition program's approach was greatly more responsive.

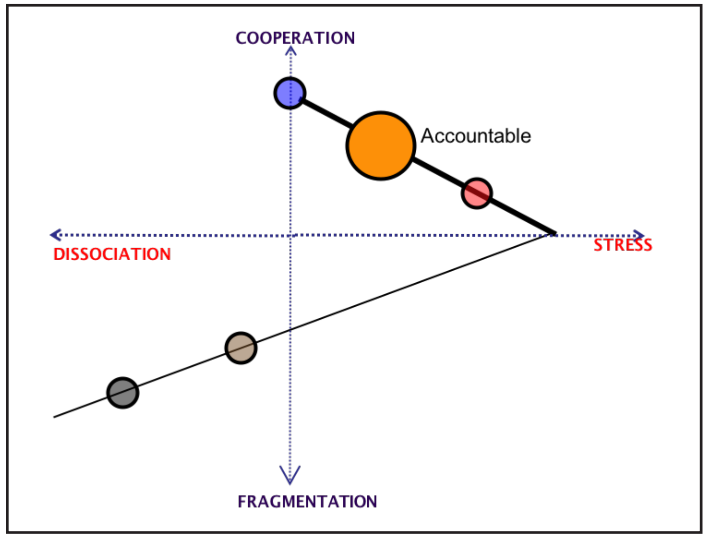
[10] From discussion with the nutrition program's nutrition project manager.

knowledge on staff to continue the work.

This case study demonstrates the improvement in performance of Inclusive partnerships over Top-down partnerships. Top-down partnerships are limited in their responsiveness, as illustrated in the previous section, by the leadership or bureaucratic systems in place. Partnerships in the Inclusive state, on the other hand, are more responsive, sharing more responsibility among the partners. This leads both to greater performance, and to a greater likelihood for capacity transfer to be successful. This ability to transfer capacity increased the likelihood of sustainable project activities and results.



THE ACCOUNTABLE STATE



The Accountable state builds on the bottom-up, but less organized collaboration initiated in the Inclusive state. In the Accountable state, the system learns to organize its internal systems by prioritizing and setting *measurable* goals for its higher results, outcomes, impacts, and strategies. Accountability for achieving these goals is then delegated down the chain of command.

This strengthens the structure of the system (much like Top-down added spine to a Fragmented system), and tends to create clear lanes of authority and accountability. When this happens, system members responsible for each of the 'lanes' prioritize their work to achieve that lane's goals, and stop involving themselves in any work that is not consistent with their priorities.

These lanes are often defined by the system's strategic goals, which are now fully measurable. The accountability for achieving these goals is now transferred from the top leadership to the leaders of the lanes. Each lane has a clear purpose and measurable goals. This allows for the continued development of systems that promote collaboration within each lane. Within the lanes, responsibility, authority, and resources are bound together and clearly delegated down the chain of command for the achievement of the lane's goal. Post mortems of actions or issues become standard procedures to identify and solve problems. Information systems are established that promote the flow of information up and down each of the lanes. Therefore, each lane becomes highly cooperative.

With full responsibility delegated to the lanes, the motivation and opportunity for learning and improving the performance within the lane increases. Each lane is able to focus on its goal or function, and through experience, create free flows of information and collaboration, and develop deep skills around the lane's goal or function.

However, this prioritization and creation of lanes leads to the downside of the Accountable state: silos within the system. Although each lane is highly cooperative and effective within itself, the lanes tend to concentrate on their own priorities and work and are not able to cooperate effectively with other lanes, leading to sub optimization. Each lane tends to believe it is the solution to the challenges confronting the system, and will push for its solution at the expense of other solutions put forward by other lanes. In Accountable, the lanes are not yet able to support other lanes in the name of achieving the larger, system-level vision and mission. For example, in for-profit organizations facing retrenchment, the R&D department will push for more R&D; the marketing department will push for more marketing; and the production department will push for a production solution – with little regard for the best system-wide strategic solution. The result of this is the development of a culture of heroes and drama, as each lane competes for resources and prominence.

In non-profits, this focus on lanes often causes high frustration for lanes that are designed to cut across other lanes. For example, sections designated to ensure gender inclusion and empowerment across the non-profit's work may face great resistance from the fundraising and project implementation lanes, because a) the latters' metrics do not hold them accountable for gender inclusion, and b) work or revisions to improve gender inclusion are seen to interfere with achieving the metrics for which they are accountable.

Because of these coordination issues, in Accountable systems it is the role of the top leadership to hold the interests of the whole system and to strategically coordinate the lanes, as the lanes are not yet disposed to sharing in the management of coordinating among themselves.

Nevertheless, despite the sub optimized cooperation among silos, performance is still measurably greater than partnerships in the Inclusive state. The newfound accountability for measurable results and clarity of organization lets the system be more efficient and responsive than one in the Inclusive state.

ACCOUNTABLE ORGANIZATIONS AS PARTNERS

Accountable organizations make good partners due to the strong cooperative capacity within their lanes. In Accountable organizations, partnerships are mostly built and maintained lane-by-lane. Due to the high level of cooperation within the lanes, the Accountable organization is able to collaborate and respond effectively with partners that have the same focus as the lane. For example, a lane dedicated to mother and child health will be able to develop a strong partnership with any organization (or organizational silo) dedicated to mother and child health. In these partnerships, the partnering lane of the Accountable organization will be able to delegate responsibility to the most appropriate level, accept and share feedback with its partners, and allocate resources as needed to achieve the partnership's goals.

Partners in the Accountable State

ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENT	CHARACTERISTICS
Vision & Mission	Staff are invested in vision, mission, strategies, and their own direct piece of the work plans
Governance	Stakeholders are integrated into strategic planning and implementation in one or more of the lanes
Leadership	Leadership is shared; each lane has its leader who looks out for that lane Ambition may be more for lane success than overall partner success Top management works to coordinate the lanes
Management & Systems	Management and systems able to prioritize and focus on their priorities – creating lanes Each lane has its own measurable goals, work plans, and KPIs
People & Culture	Within lanes, teams have the skills to achieve results and manage partnerships Cross-lane cooperation is an issue A culture of heroes and drama
Communication & Knowledge Management	Within lanes, communication and information flows freely as needed Cross-lane communication and information sharing becomes an issue
Monitoring & Evaluation	Inputs, outputs, and outcomes are measurable and monitored Lanes implement effective 'post mortems' of activities, and monitor to measure results achievements Within silos, learning and innovation can take place
Stakeholder Relations	Lanes able to develop strong stakeholder relations Lanes can manage effective partnerships Stakeholders are satisfied
Performance	Able to achieve outputs, outcomes, and some impact

While Accountable organizations can be good partners due to their lane's ability to partner, if the partnership requires the cooperation of more than one lane, the difficulty in coordinating between lanes results in an Accountable organization being a less perfect partner. In such cases, the suboptimal cooperation between lanes affects the partnership. For example, if an Accountable partner (partner A) that had one lane for nutrition and another for agricultural production partnered with an organization or network (partner B) that integrated both of these issues, it would not be able to undertake its role in the partnership in an integrated manner. For partner B, working with partner A could seem like working with two separate organizations because the low levels of coordination between the two lanes. This would lead to sub optimizations in the partnership such as duplication of effort or resources, or differing approaches to achieving the objectives.

The bottom line is that Accountable organizations, through their lanes, are able to respond effectively to both partners and stakeholders consistent with their lanes. However, results will remain suboptimal to the degree that coordination between silos is required for achieving the goals of the partnership.

That said, there are few organizations that achieve Accountable in the field in development. For international development organizations, impediments to achieving high levels of cooperative capacity include the relatively short project cycle that limit the life of project offices; the practice of routine transfers of personnel in missions; and the natural tendency toward bureaucracy of many of the players.

It takes time to move from state to state, and for a large, well-managed project, a reasonable expectation to move from one state to the next is a year and half to two years (although smaller projects may move faster). This means that it could take from four and a half years to six years for large projects to achieve the Accountable state. This time period is longer than the life of many projects.

In addition, both projects and missions are affected by turnover. Simple Rule 4 tells us that bringing in new team members returns a system to the Fragmented state as the new members become oriented and move up the ladder. The ride up the ladder may happen quickly, but there is always a reduction in cooperative capacity when new members join the team. Thus, organizations that rotate staff and leaders periodically essentially block the organization from achieving the higher cooperative states. This effect is compounded when leadership changes, and new variations of the vision, mission, and strategy are introduced.

Finally, many of the agencies in development (from both home and outside countries) are government agencies, which are typically bureaucratic and stuck in the Top-down state.

For these systemic reasons, the project cycle, staff turnover, and natural bureaucracies, there are few examples of Accountable partners in the field.

CASE STUDY: AN ACCOUNTABLE PARTNER

Though there are not many partners in the Accountable state in development, there are exceptions. The nutrition program described above is one, and provides a case study of how a partner in the Accountable state partners.

As mentioned above, the nutrition program was organized into three sections: child nutrition, water and sanitation, and community health center capacity building, each representing a strategy for achieving the program's greater goal of improving child nutrition.

Each section was accountable for achieving clear and measurable goals. Each project manager was responsible for developing and implementing the action plans to achieve their section's goal, and for monitoring their results and making adjustments as needed. This set an expectation for the nutrition program to operate in an Accountable state.

As the program moved into the Accountable state, this resulted in the development of slightly different approaches by each "lane" to achieving their goals. The sub-optimization of the Accountable state played out in the program's partnership with the local villages in the project area.

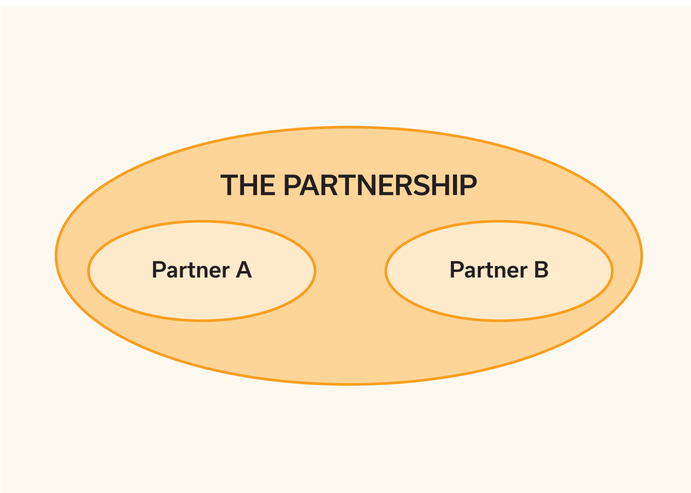
From the local villagers' perspective, working with the nutrition program was like working with three different projects. The child nutrition section worked with one group in the village, water and sanitation worked with another group (though there was overlap), and the community health center capacity-building section worked directly with the community health centers. Each section conducted their own activities in each village, and each section had their own contact person in each village.

Individually, each section performed very well, and created effective partnerships compatible with the cooperative capacity of their partners in each village. The child nutrition section trained mothers in infant and child feeding practices, created mother support groups, and built the skills of village health workers. The water and sanitation section mobilized the communities to upgrade wells, repair drainage systems, and install toilets. And the community health center introduced participatory self-assessments to the centers and then supported the implementation of the plans that came out of the assessments.

The program's strategy had been built on the following change theory: Better feeding practices plus reduced diarrhea plus improved health services would complement each other for a greater improvement in the status of child nutrition in the district. However, even though each section did good work and achieved their goals, it was difficult to perceive any direct synergy between the three program components. This lack of visible synergy between the three components in the program was reflected in its relations with its partner village, as the village groups that partnered with each section of the nutrition program also stayed separate; they learned better child feeding, how to prevent diarrhea, and saw improvements in the health centers, but did not wholly make the connection how these three changes were designed to complement each other in improving child nutrition.

One way of achieving that goal of building on the synergy of these activities would have required the nutrition program to jump to the Integrated state, which will be discussed in the following section.

ACCOUNTABLE PARTNERSHIPS



Accountable partnerships are seldom achieved in development programs in large part due to the scarcity of partners in the Accountable state. Therefore, we have found no descriptions of accountable partnerships in the literature. The description below shows the potential of Accountable partnerships, were Accountable partners available, and the partnership had time to move up the ladder to the Accountable state.

Accountable partnerships, due to their ability to prioritize and create high-functioning lanes, which could be determined by strategic goals or strengths of the partners, are higher performing than Inclusive partnerships. Due to their setting of measurable strategic goals, their greater ability delegate appropriately to the lanes, and their strong ability to communicate up, down, and across, Accountable partnerships are better able to create sustainable (ongoing) projects and, through their lanes, have greater ability to transfer capacity than the more general and often muddled approach of Inclusive partnerships.

Partnerships in the Accountable State

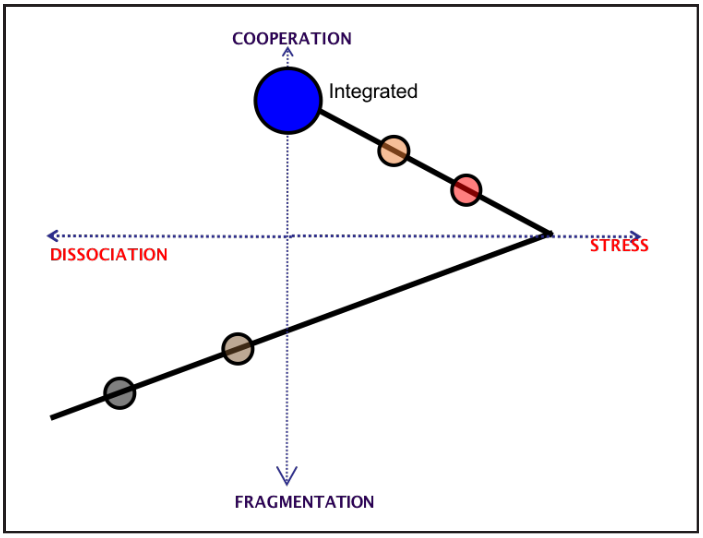
PARTNERSHIP ELEMENT	CHARACTERISTICS
Vision & Mission	Partners are invested in and share strategic goals and exit strategy, and assign priorities and measurable goals and develop action plans together
Governance	Power is shared between the partners Both partners invest substantial resources into the partnership
Leadership	Overall leadership is shared Each lane of the partnership has its own leader
Management & Systems	Power and decision making are shared Management systems promote and enable prioritization to create clear lanes of accountability Measurable goals for achieving results are in place and assigned to each lane
Communication & Knowledge Management	Within silos of the partnership, communication and access to information is as needed
Monitoring & Evaluation	Inputs, outputs, and outcomes are assigned to lanes and are measurable and monitored Lanes implement effective 'post mortems' of activities and monitor to measure results achievements Learning and innovation takes place within the lanes of the partnerships
Stakeholder Relations	Stakeholders understand vision, mission, strategies, and work plans of at least one lane Stakeholders are satisfied
Performance	Most outputs and outcomes are achieved; impact is probable; high potential for sustainability

Performance improves in Accountable partnerships because responsibility, authority, and measurable goals are delegated down the chain of command in line with the partnership's strategic priorities, creating the lanes. Within the lanes, information and communication flows provide information where and when needed, allowing more rational decision making. The ability of the lanes to create multi-directional communication, feedback, and response systems promote the development of strong partnerships that respond to the needs of the partners and stakeholders.

Likewise, capacity building is even more likely to succeed because the shared responsibility and increased delegation within the silos continue to build the ability to learn and respond that began in the Inclusive state. Due to clearer goals, stronger delegation, and better communication within the lanes, the partners can more effectively listen and respond to each other.

A partnership in the Accountable state will achieve high levels of capacity development and programmatic results. The partnership is able to focus on its vision, mission, strategy, and work plans (including capacity development) by prioritizing and saying "no" to lesser priorities, and setting metrics for the priorities. Within the partnership's lanes, information is openly shared, and roles and responsibilities are appropriately delegated among the partners. This leads to the effective use of resources, and the flexibility to potentially develop innovative responses to both capacity development and goal achievement.

THE INTEGRATED STATE



The Integrated state solves the problem of the Accountable state's sub-optimization and is the pinnacle of collaboration and performance. In the Integrated state, managers have the incentives and ability to meld their areas of responsibility to do whatever it takes to achieve the system's vision and mission. Systems and practices are in place to share information and transfer resources strategically among the lanes and to the parts of the system that need them.

There is no longer competition between lanes. Lane leaders now put the system's vision and mission achievement above lane achievement, and lane leaders participate in making rational adjustments in strategic and lane goals to maximize system achievement.[11] Management is now able to move resources in a timely manner across lanes in order to meet the system's goals or to respond to systemic threats.

In Integrated systems, transparency is maximized; each member has easy access to the information (and the authority and resources) they need to make a decision in the moment to achieve the vision and mission of the systems. This allows these systems to be agile and innovative. Performance in the Integrated state is maximized, particularly in uncertain and rapidly changing situations.

The Integrated state unites the strengths of the previous states: the discipline of the Top-down state; the awareness of the whole system of the Inclusive state; and the prioritization and measurable goals of the Accountable state. It adds the ability to make integrated, rational, strategic and tactical adjustments to achieve the vision and mission of the whole system.

In practice, the Integrated state is difficult to achieve and sustain. For example, the Baldrige Award, the United States Presidential award for performance excellence, is set up to measure best business practices with a 1000-point scale, which represents a highly Integrated state, and no winner has ever scored out of the 600s. Moving into the Integrated state is hard.

For this reason, aside from the literature on turnarounds, almost all current management literature is designed to help systems move from Accountable to Integrated.[12] At this time, many modern organizations, including many development organizations, are experimenting and searching for systems and practices that will move them up into the Integrated state. This is why it is important for systems to understand their current state before applying the latest trends in the management literature. These trends will most likely be neither useful nor accepted by systems in the Top-down or Inclusive states (Simple Rule 1: *A system will move only one state at a time*), but perfect for those systems already in Accountable.

INTEGRATED ORGANIZATIONS AS PARTNERS

Integrated organizations make excellent partners. They are readily able to share power, resources, and information within their own organization and within a partnership. Integrated organizations are learning organizations, and are able to adjust rationally to their partners' and the partnership's needs as required and appropriate.

Partners in the Integrated State

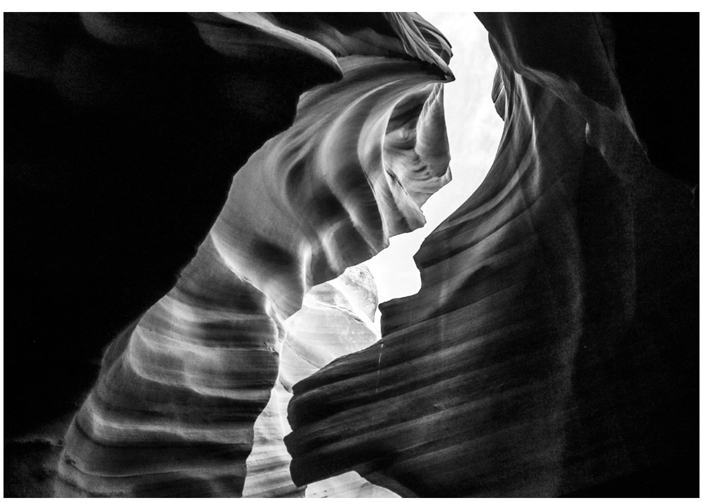
ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENT	CHARACTERISTICS
Vision & Mission	All staff invested in vision, mission, strategies, and work plans Each lane understands the relationship of its work plans with the work plans of other lanes
Governance	Stakeholders are integrated into governance, strategic planning, and operations
Leadership	Leaders are highly effective, disciplined, driven, and often understated There is a strong leadership group that puts the interests of the organization first, and is able to coordinate and share resources strategically
Management & Systems	Management systems able to focus on organization-wide priorities and shift resources among lanes as necessary
People & Culture	Members are highly skilled, particularly in their area of expertise, and embrace accountability for overall organizational performance There is a culture of rationality, teamwork, and mutual trust and respect
Communication & Knowledge Management	Information flows to where needed, when it is needed, throughout the organization and with its partners
Monitoring & Evaluation	M&E is a resource and integrated with workgroup planning and implementation, guiding the building of partner performance in all lanes
Stakeholder Relations	Very strong relations with stakeholders Stakeholders understand vision, mission, strategies, and work plans, and are integral to the work
Performance	Able to achieve outputs, outcomes, and impact

[11] In reality, this does not preclude conflict; as described in Collin's book, *Good to Great*, groups in the Integrated state use conflict to find the 'hard truth' and make the best decision possible *for the system*. And once a decision has been made, the group puts the conflict behind them supports and implements the decision fully.

[12] Books such as Peter Senge's *The Fifth Discipline*, Jim Collin's *Good to Great*, and Gary Hamel's, *The Future of Management*, all focus on the move to the Integrated state.

Partners in the Integrated state are able to work well with partners in other states, as they are able to adjust their behavior to meet the needs of their partners, no matter what state the partner is in. For example, an Integrated partner can, and must, interact with a Fragmented partner in a fragmented way, a Top-down partner in a top-down way, and so on up the ladder because the state of a partnership is limited to the state of the lowest partner (Simple Rule 3). That said, partners in the Integrated state can live with and manage these constraints as necessary (unless they want to invest in increasing the cooperative capacity of the weakest partner). Figure 8, to the right, shows the highest level of partnership that an integrated partner can make with partners in each of the other cooperative capacity states.

It is important to note that the cooperative capacity of the partnership does not affect the cooperative capacity of the Integrated partner, which is able to manage its boundaries and maintain its internal cooperative capacity state.[13] In all of these partnerships, Integrated partners are able to make rational decisions to maintain good relations with their partners while sharing authority and shifting resources in appropriate ways, given the cooperative capacity of the partner and the vision, mission, and strategy of the partnership.



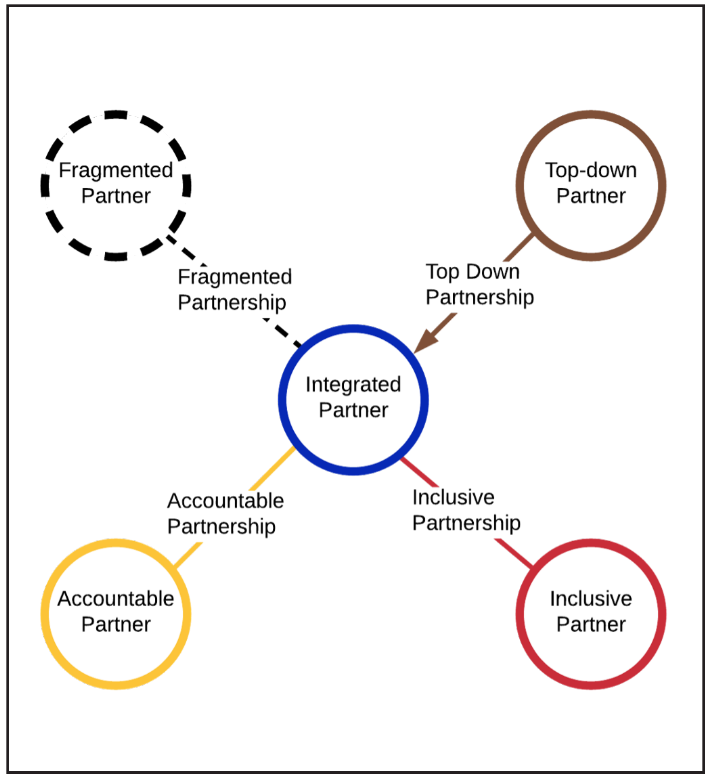
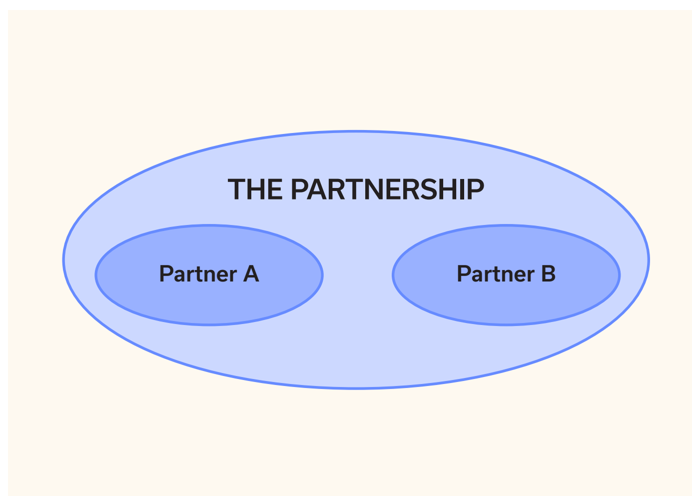


Figure 8: An Integrated Partner's Highest Potential Partnerships

INTEGRATED PARTNERSHIPS



Integrated partnerships are those ideal partnerships described above that demonstrate the "almost seamless blending of actors":

[13] There is one exception to this principle: If the partner in the lower state is far more powerful and puts unmanageable stress on the less powerful integrated partner, can cause the integrated partner to begin moving down the cooperative capacity ladder. This is often seen in acquisitions, where a very large company acquires a much smaller, nimble company which is higher on the ladder than the acquiring company.

Partnerships in the Integrated State

ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENT	CHARACTERISTICS
Vision & Mission	All partners are invested in vision, mission, strategies, and work plans Each partner understands the relationship of its workplans with the workplans of other partners
Governance	Power is shared rationally between the partners Both partners invest substantial resources into the partnership
Leadership	There is a strong leadership group that puts the interest of the partnership first, and able to coordinate and share resources strategically
Management & Systems	Management systems able to focus on partnership-wide priorities and shift resources among partners as necessary
People & Culture	Partners are highly skilled, particularly in their area of expertise, and embrace accountability for overall partnership performance There is a culture of rationality, teamwork, and mutual trust and respect
Communication & Knowledge Management	Information flows to where needed, when it is needed throughout the partnership
Monitoring & Evaluation	M&E is a resource and integrated with partnership planning and implementation, guiding the building of partner performance in all lanes
Stakeholder Relations	Very strong relations with stakeholders Stakeholders understand vision, mission, strategies, workplans and are integral to the work
Performance	Able to achieve outputs, outcomes, and impact

Due to their ability to respond rationally and effectively to internal and external challenges, Integrated partnerships achieve the highest level of results—not just outputs and outcomes, but also impacts.

Governance, planning, and implementation in Integrated partnerships are both inclusive and transparent, employing the skills and knowledge of all partners and stakeholders. All partners are highly invested in the vision, mission, strategies, work plans, and core values of the partnership. All partners share responsibility for partnership results. Decision making is based on vision, mission, and core values. Structures are highly flexible and able to adapt to situations as they arise.

These partnerships are true learning systems; they are able to learn from both successes and failures in order to innovate and adapt as needed to achieve their goals. Learning across silos is promoted by shared accountability and shared measurable goals for overall partnership results

Capacity transfer is inherent in Integrated partnerships. Authority and responsibility are delegated to the most appropriate teams within the partnership. The partnership then fully supports this delegation by providing the necessary resources and information, responding to feedback, and capacity building to ensure success.

Integrated partnerships are the ideal partnerships described in the development partnership literature. However, to achieve this level of partnership requires the time and effort to build a partnership's management skills, processes, and framework by moving through each of the previous cooperative states.

IMPLICATIONS OF PARTNERSHIP CAPACITY

The cooperative capacity framework is a useful tool for planning, managing, and monitoring and evaluating as it provides a measurable indicator of the health of partnerships that is linked to improved performance.

Through the case studies and experiences described above, we have shown that each cooperative capacity state correlates to measurable differences in performance.

As the case study of Partner F and evaluation review by Bezanson and Isenman demonstrate, partners and partnerships in the Fragmented state have extremely low performance, and are at risk of, at best, undergoing major turnaround efforts, or at worst, being closed down.

As Bezanson and Isenman and the case study by Dodds and Klassen show, partnerships in the Top-down state avoid these risks and are able to produce outputs. If direction from the dominant partner or group is good, positive results may be achieved. However, if direction from the top is poor, the outputs achieved by the partnership may not achieve the desired outcomes or impacts.

Finally, as the experience of the nutrition program illustrates, partnerships in the Inclusive state are more responsive to the needs and capabilities of both partners and are able to achieve lasting results. Moreover, the Inclusive state is the first state in which truly effective capacity transfer may take place.

From these examples, the performance gains moving up the ladder from each of these states is easily double that of the previous state. Consistently producing outputs that ensure continued funding in the Top-down state is more than double the performance of the failing to produce outputs and facing possible closure or reorganization that is common in the Fragmented state. And transferring capacity to a permanent local actor which will continue providing project services as is possible in an Inclusive partnership, is more than double the performance of achieving a set of outputs that ends when the project ends as typical in a Top-down partnership.

The lack of case studies of partnerships in the Accountable and Integrated states prevents us from demonstrating this trend through the higher states of the cooperative capacity ladder. To clearly demonstrate this exemplifies the need for more systemic and in-depth research to test the framework.

However, we have evidence from looking at organizations that this trend does continue. If we assume that doubling of performance takes place as a partnership moves up each state of the ladder, its performance curve would look something like Figure 9 on the right.

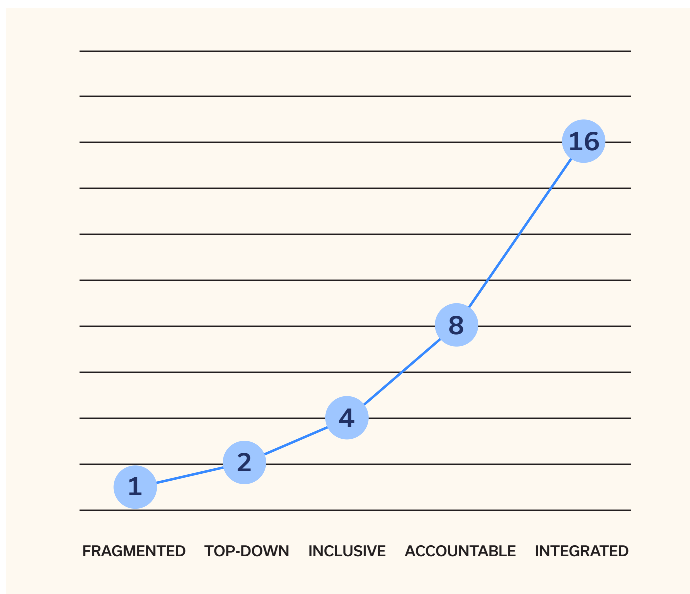


Figure 9: Example Growth Curve with Performance Doubling in Each State

This correlates with the growth of the stock market returns curve of high-performing companies researched in Jim Collins book Good to Great. In that research, Collins identified companies that 'took off' and beat their industry standard market returns by more than ten times over a 30-year period. Below is a graph showing the cumulative market returns of these companies compared to companies in the same industry which, from the same starting point, did not take off. The research found that the companies that took off outperformed the comparison companies by more than 30 to 1 (Collins). This growth path is shown in Figure 10.

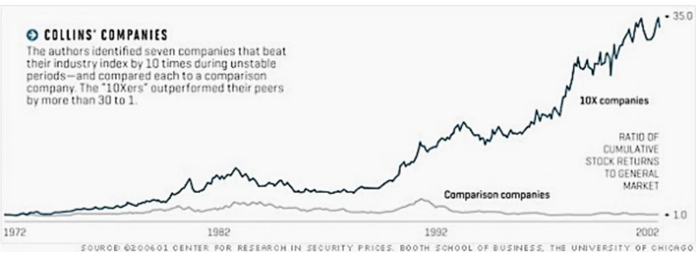


Figure 10: Growth of "Collin's Companies"

USES IN PROJECT PLANNING

First, the existence of a leading indicator of performance combined with the expectation of non-linear growth allows planners to justify and include both partner and partnership capacity-building activities in their planning systems.

The cooperative capacity ladder provides capacity-building goals for planners; each higher cooperative capacity state becomes a goal and the KPIs become objectives which drive capacity-building activities. This allows planners to sequence measurable objectives and schedule actions that are appropriate to the current cooperative capacity state, and will improve partner and partnership performance. An example goal hierarchy is presented in the box to the right.

The expected, non-linear improvement in performance provides planners with the case for trading off demands for quick performance early in a project's life in exchange for greater performance later in the project's life. The framework clearly shows the benefits of providing time and resources to build both partner and partnership capacity early in the project, and the non-linear gains in performance later in the project.

Goal: Move Partner into the Top-down State

- Objective 1: Officially adopt a functional vision and mission.
- Objective 2: Ensure staff, board members, and partners understand the vision and mission.
- Objective 3: Establish a clear chain of command to ensure all partners know, unambiguously, what activities they are responsible for and who they report to.

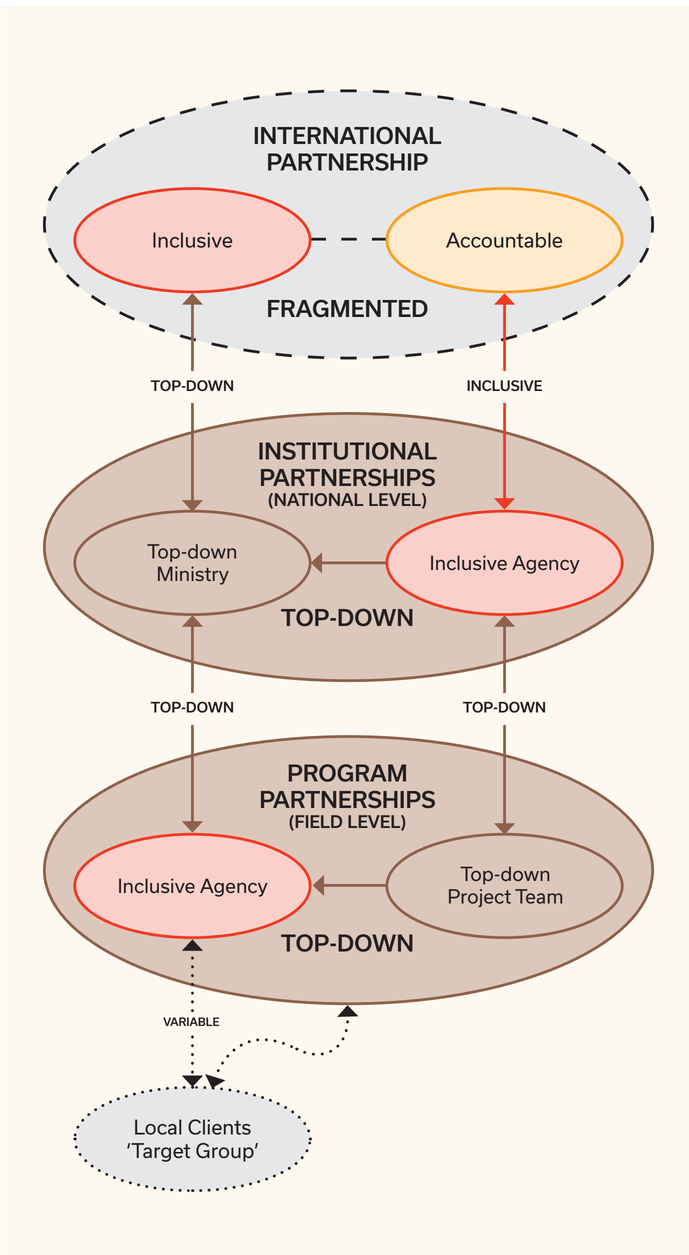
USES IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS

The CCP framework provides a tool for managers at all levels to monitor and manage the performance of the partners and partnerships in their partnership systems.

By building out the partnership system map, project managers can identify the partnerships that are most important for achieving their desired results, sustainability, and scaling, and then develop partnerships that promote these goals.

Using the map, they can also identify the weaknesses in the system, and make the appropriate partnership and partner capacity-building interventions that will leverage partnership and system performance. This includes having a roadmap (the cooperative capacity ladder and maturity matrix) for developing their own team's ability to perform and partner.

Finally, the framework gives project managers a technical language that is consistent throughout their partnership system to report on the states and current capacity of their partners and partnerships. This provides the whole partnership system with a shared understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the system, and enables lessons learned to be transferred across projects and programs.



USES IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Finally, the framework provides clear and measurable indicators for partner and partnership performance. Assessing the cooperative capacity state of partners and partnerships early in the program provides a baseline for managerial performance, and clear indicators for assessing changes in performance over the life of a project.

The table below shows some of the performances that can be measured by the cooperative capacity framework and used through M&E to track and predict the results of partner and partnership capacity building.

Summary of Performance of a Partnership in Each State

Partnership State:	**FRAGMENTED**
Expected Results:	Failure or Some Outputs
Partnership Effectiveness:	Very Low
Capacity Development:	None
Innovative & Adaptive:	No
Responsive:	No
Risk of Failure:	High
Partnership State:	**TOP-DOWN**
Expected Results:	Only Ouputs
Partnership Effectiveness:	Low
Capacity Development:	Unsustainable
Innovative & Adaptive:	No
Responsive:	Low
Risk of Failure:	High
Partnership State:	**INCLUSIVE**
Expected Results:	Outputs and Outcomes
Partnership Effectiveness:	Moderate
Capacity Development:	Moderate
Innovative & Adaptive:	Low
Responsive:	Moderate
Risk of Failure:	Low
Partnership State:	**ACCOUNTABLE**
Expected Results:	Outcomes, Some Impact
Partnership Effectiveness:	High
Capacity Development:	High
Innovative & Adaptive:	Moderate
Responsive:	High
Risk of Failure:	Low
Partnership State:	**INTEGRATED**
Expected Results:	Impacts
Partnership Effectiveness:	High
Capacity Development:	High
Innovative & Adaptive:	High
Responsive:	Very High
Risk of Failure:	Low

CONCLUSION

A TESTABLE FRAMEWORK FOR MEASURING PARTNERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS

The goal of this paper was to introduce indicators that accurately reflect the performance and effectiveness of partnership systems.

CCP's cooperative capacity framework provides these indicators.

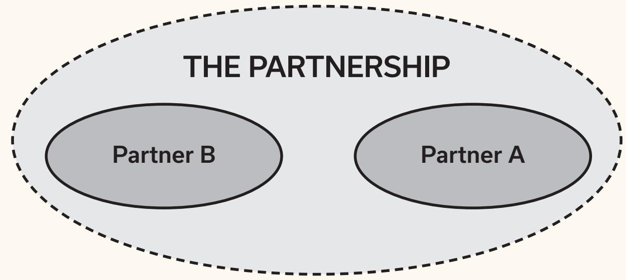
The first part of the framework is the partnership "egg." The egg is a model of a partnership that explicitly illustrates the need to evaluate both the performance and capacity of each partner to cooperate and the performance of the partnership itself.

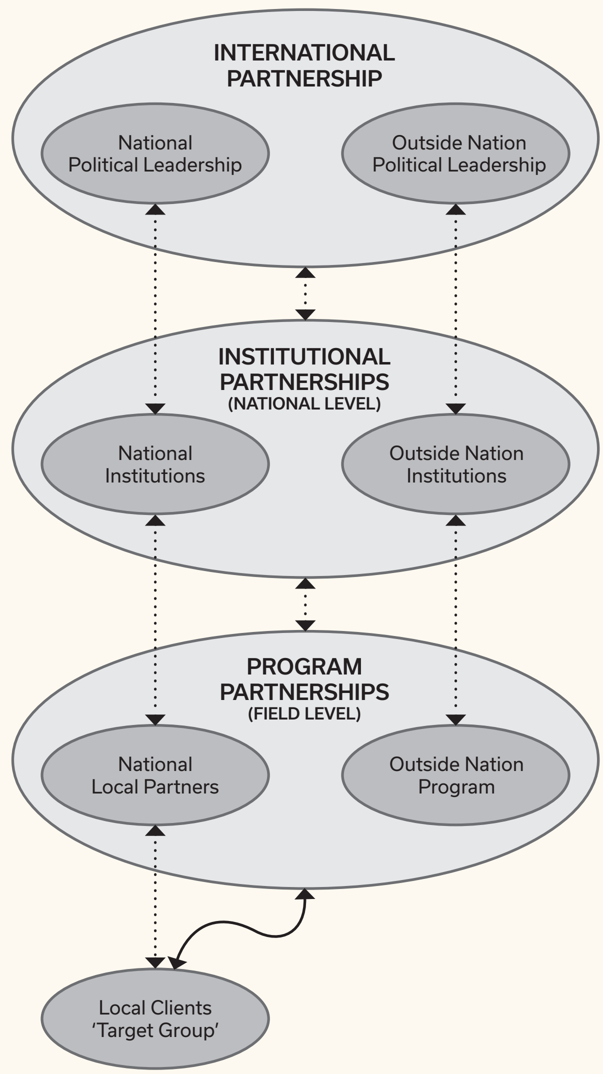
The second part of our framework is a map of the partnership system. This map identifies the pathways through which information flows up, down, and across the system; the partnerships necessary for establishing sustainable impacts; and the partnerships necessary for scaling successful programs.

The final part of the framework is the Cooperative Capacity Ladder, with its five cooperative states that are indicators of partner and partnership capacity. These indicators are directly related to measurable differences in both a partner organization's performance and ability to partner, and the performance of the partnership itself. The five cooperative states are named **Fragmented,** **Top-down,** **Inclusive,** **Accountable,** and **Integrated.**

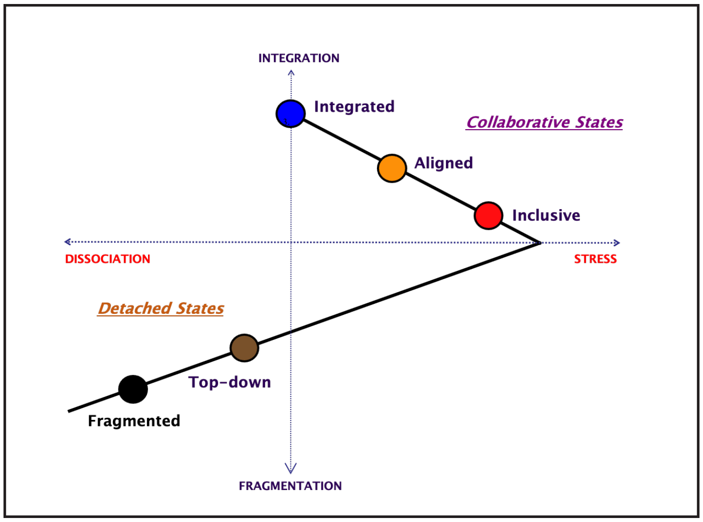
In this paper, we illustrated the characteristics and performance of each of the states for partners and partnerships using available case studies from the literature and CCP's own experience. Below is a brief recap of each state.

The **Fragmented** state is an adhocracy, with no clear vision, mission, or leadership to guide





The Cooperative Capacity Framework



the system. Fragmented partners make terrible partners, as they are unable to make and follow up on agreements. Fragmented partnerships lack direction and are driven by the (often conflicting) individual interests of their members. Fragmented systems are unable to consistently achieve outputs, and are at high risk of reorganization, going out of business, or closure from unsatisfied stakeholders.

The **Top-down** state adds spine to the adhocracy of the Fragmented state. Top-down is highly centralized, relying on a strong leader for direction or the obedient adherence to established systems and procedures. Top-down partners are unable to partner collaboratively ; they are only able to take a dominant or subordinate role in a partnership. Top-down partnerships are led by one dominant partner with other partners acquiescing to vision and mission, and using the systems of the dominant partner. Top-down partners and partnerships are able to achieve outputs and survive in non-competitive environments where resources (such as funding) are secure; Top-down systems are at high risk of failure in competitive or rapidly changing environments.

The **Inclusive** state is the first state in which true collaboration begins. Staff or partners are now invested in the vision, mission, and strategies. Leadership asks for and acts on feedback from below. Authority and responsibility are distributed down the chain of command, and staff and partners take charge of implementing strategies (but not yet measuring strategic goals). Inclusive partners can develop collaborative, responsive partnerships that promote capacity transfer. Inclusive partnerships are able to share power and responsibility for achieving vision, mission, and strategic goals, and accept feedback and respond to their stakeholders. Inclusive partners and partnerships are able to achieve outputs and some outcomes, and are able to survive in competitive and changing environments.

The **Accountable** state adds structure by establishing priorities and setting measurable goals for staff and partners. This creates specialties, or lanes, in which staff prioritize to achieve their own goals and can have difficulty coordinating with other lanes. Accountable partners make good, collaborative partners as long as the partnership corresponds to a lane of the partners; if the coordination of two or more lanes is required in a partnership, the lanes will have difficulty coordinating. Accountable partnerships share power, expertise, and responsibilities, and organize into lanes to achieve clear, measurable strategic goals set by the partnership. Accountable partners and partnerships are able to achieve outputs, outcomes, and some impact and typically succeed in competitive and changing environments.

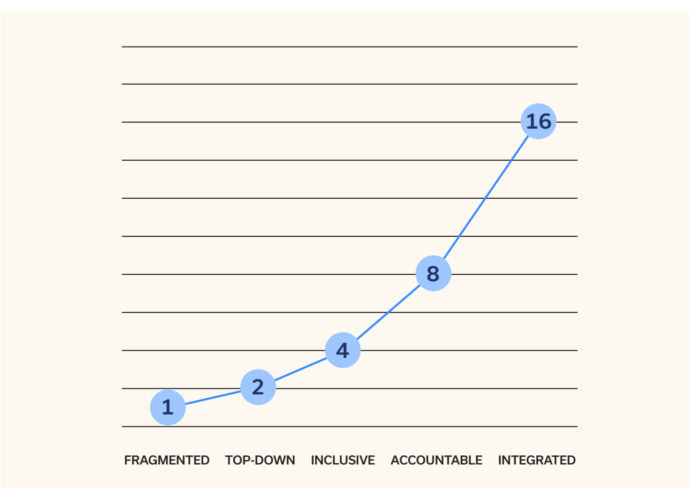
The **Integrated** state solves the coordination issues among the lanes. Each lane now prioritizes the achievement of the overall vision and mission and actively participate in coordinating and sharing resources measurably, rationally, and strategically across the system. Integrated partners are able to adapt and partner well with partners in any state. Integrated partnerships share power and distribute resources rationally to achieve the partnership's vision, mission, and goals. Integrated partners and partnerships achieve outcomes, outputs, and impacts and thrive in competitive and turbulent environments.

A set of corollaries, what we call Simple Rules, determines how performance improves and sets the limits on partnership capacity. First, partners and partnerships can move up the cooperative capacity ladder only one state at a time. Each state sets the stage for the next state up the ladder. Second, the cooperative state of a partnership cannot be higher than the lowest state of any of the partners.

The case studies in this paper demonstrate our experience that a partner or partnership moving up one state will at least double performance by any stakeholder measure. For example, the ability of Inclusive partnerships to meet all project goals and transfer capacity is more than double the performance of Top-down partnerships that achieve only outputs.

This doubling of performance as partners and partnerships move up the Cooperative Capacity Ladder indicates that performance growth is not linear; performance growth will be slower in the lower cooperative states and increase in a non-linear fashion, as cooperative capacity increases.

We were not able to find examples of Accountable or Integrated partnerships in the international public sector literature. This is not surprising given that the time needed to move partners and then partnerships into these higher states is most often longer than the life of development projects.



APPLICATIONS OF THE COOPERATIVE CAPACITY FRAMEWORK

The cooperative capacity framework provides an organizational and partnership assessment framework that can be useful to a number of development practitioners, including planners, implementers, and evaluators.

For planners, the framework provides goals, objectives, actions, and timelines to move partners and partnerships into the higher states. In addition, the prediction of non-linear performance gains enables planners to justify expending the time and resources necessary for building strong partnerships by trading off performance early in the project for greater performance later in the project.

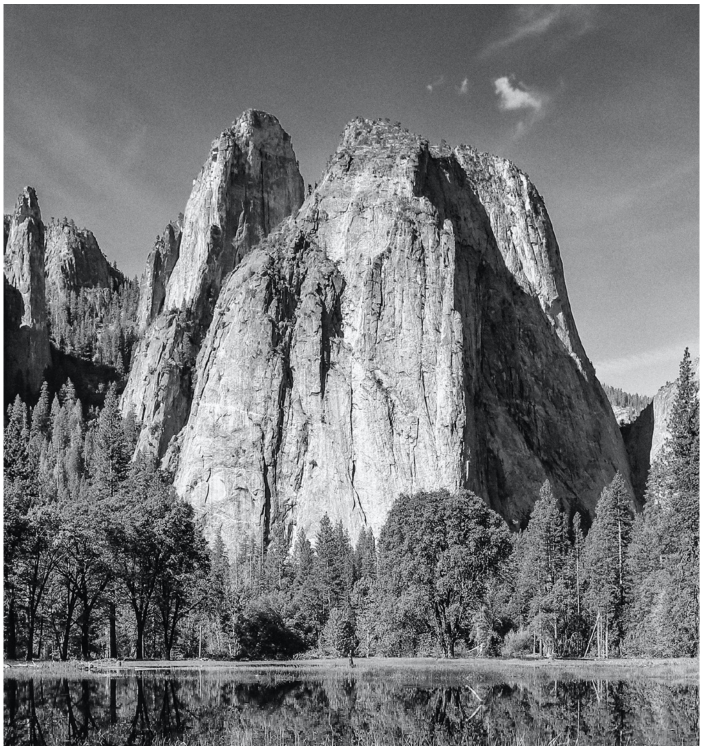
The framework also provides planners and those interested in development effectiveness the ability to strategically identify the strengths and weaknesses of their partnership system, and develop interventions to improve the overall performance of the system.

For implementers, the framework provides guidelines for the sequencing of management systems and practices that will quickly move their teams and partnerships into higher states. The framework also allows them to monitor and build their partnerships to maximize their ability to transfer capacity, create sustainable solutions, and scale their project.

For capacity builders, the framework provides the basic goal hierarchy and sequencing of technical and managerial interventions to build capacity that is consistent with the current state of the recipient organization, and therefore will have the most leverage in improving performance.

For evaluators, the framework provides a basic assessment framework, objective measures, and vocabulary that will allow them to identify the impacts of partner and partnership management on goal achievement, and to share lessons learned across projects.

Finally, for researchers, we agree with Horton, *et al.* that there is a need for more systemic and in-depth empirical research on partnerships. The cooperative capacity framework described here is a testable framework comparing sets of management indicators with performance, and offers hypotheses for further research into assessing the quality and effectiveness of partners and partnerships.



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