

It takes two to tango— When aid partnerships go wrong

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An overview of the presentation

- How “effective” aid partnerships are defined
- Background of the case study (ELTT in Bangladesh)
- Problems with shared ownership
- Alignment to which priorities and who is setting them?
- Accountability to whom and for what?
- Some humble thoughts for improvement

Current discourse on effective partnerships (Paris Declaration)

Shared ownership

- Recipient countries need to identify needs through a consultative process
- Donors need to respect country leadership and the identified needs

Alignment and harmonisation

- Donors align assistance and any conditions to National Strategic Development Plans
- Donors work through and strengthen existing country system rather than work around them

Mutual accountability and transparency

- Recipients of aid required to operate under principles of “good governance”
- Donors need to be transparent and accountable for what they are giving and why

Bangladesh: ELTT Project

- Compulsory Primary Education Act, 1990
- PEDP I (1996 - 2004)
 - multi-donor group
- PEDP II (2003–2011)
 - (ADB, World Bank, NORAD, SIDA, CIDA, EC, Netherlands, DFID, AusAID, UNICEF)
- National Plan of Action (2002-2015)
- ELTT Project (multi-agency project)



Shared ownership?

- Donor agendas never free of self-interest, and recipient countries wanting to be left alone
- How are priorities set, and how consultative is the process?



Ownership Issues - ELTT

- Over-centralisation (MoPME-DPE)
- Institutional Capacity
- Infrastructure constraints
- ELTT Project caught in no-man's Land

PEDP II - Key Statistics (Unicef)

Child Population (aged 6 to 10)	18.1 million
Number of children enrolled in school (aged 6 to 10)	17.7 million
Primary School Enrolment (% net, boys / girls)	82 / 86
Primary School children reaching grade 5 (%)	65
Teacher – student ratio	1:67
Average contact time at school per year	587
Adult literacy rate (older than 15, male / female)	50 / 31

ELTT Project

- BD High Commission – AusAID – Bangladesh GoB
- 6 ELLTs at PTIs (Primary Teaching Institutes)
- 5 ELTTs at TTCs (Teacher Training Institutes)
- 1 ELTT at NAPE (National Academy of Primary Education)
- Coverage: 11 Districts
- Period: 2-3 years

Alignment and harmonisation?

- Competing donor interests in a crowded field
- Unequal power dynamics
- Do we really trust you?

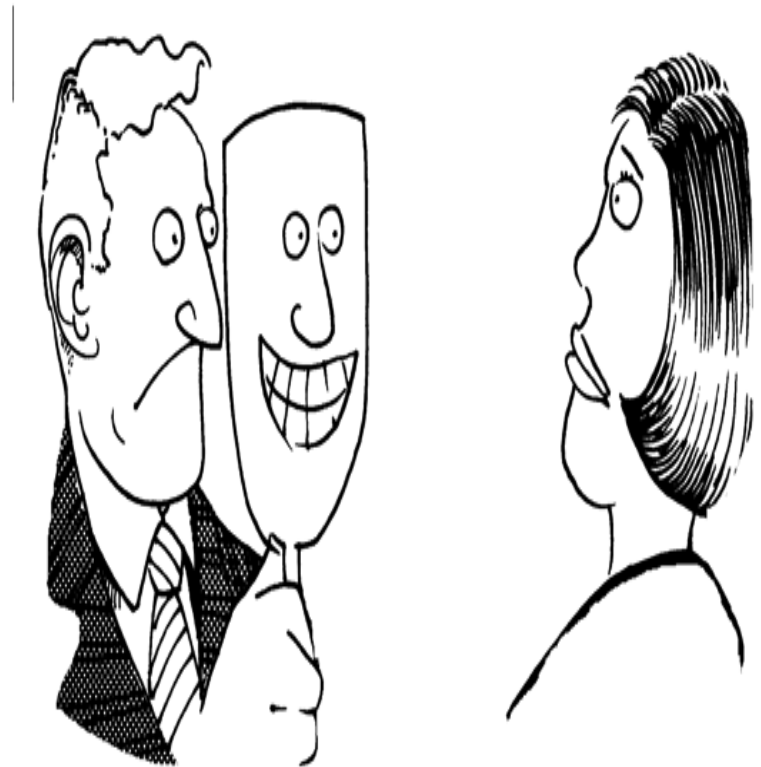


Alignment and harmonisation issues

- Donors too eager to work within the public education system
- Donors agree to follow GoB's quantitative approach
- Lack of coordination
- Overlapping
- Competition (donors attempt to have a bigger presence in particular fields)

Mutual accountability?

- Perverse incentives— recipients wanting to get as much money out of the deal as possible, donors wanting to show maximum results
- End users often forgotten



Accountability – Transparency

ELTT

- Ghost consultative process
- Implementation left to the discretion of HO's
- Loose outcomes
- Secretive monitoring & review processes
- Lack of communication between donor and GoB
- Programme lost in between changes of administration

So who is the real victim when partnerships go wrong?



Tuker Bazar Primary School – Sylhet , Bangladesh



Lama Bazar Primary School, Sylhet, Bangladesh



In my humble opinion...

Possibilities

- Closer look at Paris Declaration re. stakeholders (Government-Civil society-NGOs)
- Improvement Consultation Process
- Increased donor pressure on recipient governments to allow intervention when there are serious capacity issues.

Possible risk

- Goes against good governance practice.
- Risks deviating scarce resources in further administrative activities. In BD context, it might foster further politicization of education development process.
- Goes against ownership and country leadership.