



Conditions for Success: Transnational Water Partnerships in Fragile Areas

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Research Question

Under what *conditions*
are *transnational partnerships*
for sustainable development
successful
(in terms of output, outcome and impact)
esp. in *fragile areas*?

Partnership Types

Knowledge partnerships

Task:

Generate new expertise, engage in agenda setting, provide a forum for the exchange and dissemination of best practices

Service partnerships

Task:

Mobilize and allocate resources and provide services, for example, through the implementation of projects

Standard-setting partnerships

Task:

Establish voluntary standards, for example, drafting a voluntary code of conduct (and a verification or certification scheme)

Water Partnership Cases

Knowledge partnership:



wants to enhance and spread the concept of integrated water resources management

Service partnership:



aims at improving access to water and sanitary services in poor urban areas

Standard-setting partnership:



develops the International Water Stewardship Standard

Methods

We assessed:

- **institutional characteristics** of the partnership and its projects, e.g. partnership and project management, degree of institutionalization, inclusiveness;
- **characteristics of the fragile areas** where partnership projects are implemented, e.g. security issues or low capacities of the local state and non-state actors or service providers;
- ▷ the **interplay** between the institutional characteristics of the partnership projects and the characteristics of the area in which projects are carried out: does the project design reflect the specific challenges in the area?
- ▷ **Success factors**: We analyzed which *design characteristics* matter most in a typical project cycle to achieve output, desired outcomes, and a long-term impact.

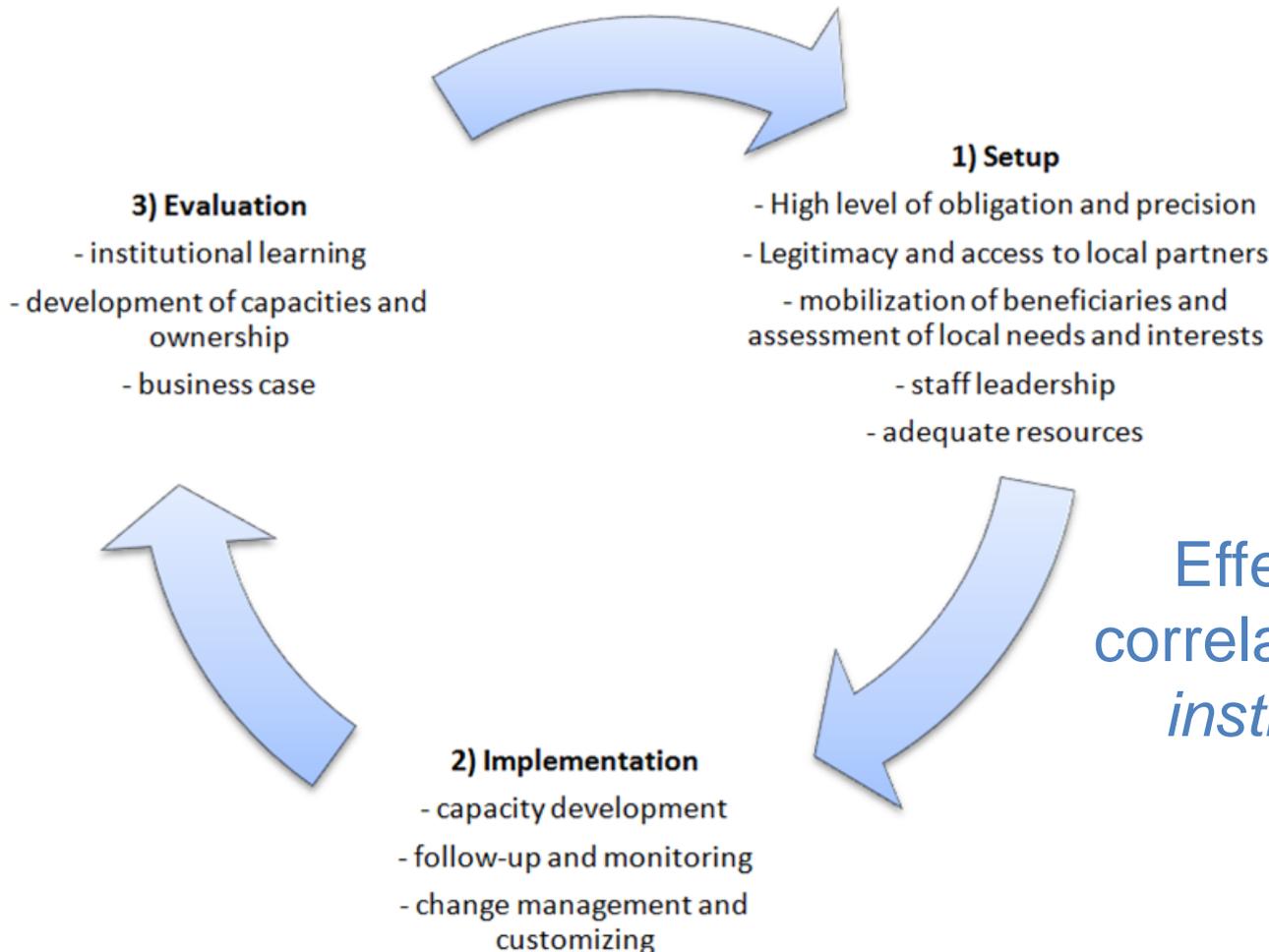
Interviews and Field Work: 21 partnerships and 40 projects in four countries



WSUP in Kenya and India



Conditions for Success: Institutional Design Matters



Effectiveness strongly correlates with degree of *institutionalization* and quality of *process management*

Specific Conditions for Success along Types

- *Service-providing* and *standard-setting* partnerships require precise and obligatory rules and independent monitoring
- *Knowledge partnerships* do not necessarily require binding rules and a monitoring system to be effective in generating or sharing knowledge. For them, effective learning mechanisms, pronounced openness and critical reflection are crucial.
- **No blueprint! But...**
All types of partnerships benefit from good process management and institutional learning. For this, it is important to balance precise and obligatory norms and close monitoring with flexible and adaptive strategies to cope with challenges.

Current and Future Research (2014-17)

Assess stakeholder views

- (1) on how to achieve broad-scale and long-term *impact*
 - (2) on *meta-governance* of partnerships as a success factor for partnerships, e.g. role of criteria, guidelines or accountability frameworks
- ▷ Special focus on *UN guidance* for the Post-2015 partnerships for sustainable development, linked to SDGs
 - ▷ Explore also *national initiatives* that aim at better political guidance for partnerships
 - ▷ Also evaluate *private initiatives* to follow-up partnerships

Further Reading

*Beisheim, Marianne/Liese, Andrea (Eds.)
Transnational Partnerships:
Effectively Providing for Sustainable
Development?
Palgrave Macmillan 2014*

*Beisheim, Marianne
Partnerships for Sustainable
Development
SWP Research Paper, 2012/RP 03
(free download)*

See also: www.sfb-governance.de/ppp

