# OR/17/039 Science-for-development partnerships



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*(Contributors/editors: Ellis, M, Lapworth, D, Ludden, J, Rees, G (CEH), Smith, M, and Watts, M).*

The final session of the workshop invited participants to characterise good *science-for-development* partnerships, using a questionnaire methodology. Here we note a summary of initial results. Data will be analysed further in the context of the published literature, and drafted into a separate future report.

In this context, we consider '*science-for-development*' to be research, application and/or communication of science directed towards efforts to tackle poverty, improve economic and human development, manage the natural environment, and reduce risk and increase resilience. Science and research that supports sustainable development may require collaborations that are:

- **International** (i.e., people and organizations from multiple countries),
- **Multi-sectoral** (i.e., people from diverse sectors, such as the public and private sectors),
- **Multi-disciplinary** (i.e., people from diverse disciplinary backgrounds). Questionnaires were completed independently by participants, and they were anonymous.

Participants were initially asked to comment on previous experience of *science-for-development* partnerships. They then proceeded to explore what characteristics they think are most important in developing positive and effective partnerships. Fourteen characteristics were presented, with participants asked to rate on a 7-point Likert scale (from *Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree*) how important they believe each factor to be in the formation of positive 'science-for-development' partnerships. One test characteristic (*members of the partnership are all the same nationality*) was also added to check that participants were evaluating each statement carefully and not simply giving the highest ranking to each statement.

Based on 21 responses, the characteristics of *science-for-development* partnerships ranked as being of most importance are listed below.

1. Sharing of project outputs across the partnership (e.g., reports, journal articles).
2. Sharing of data across the partnership.
3. Being treated as an equal by other members of the partnership.
3. Access to training and capacity building.
5. Respectful dialogue between members of the partnership.
5. Access to funding/financial resources.
7. Co-authorship of research outputs (e.g., journal articles, reports).
8. Frequent e-mail communication between members of the partnership.
9. Opportunity for all members of the partnership to contribute to project design.
9. Regular face-to-face meetings between members of the partnership.
11. Access to expertise of other organizations.
11. Understanding of cultural differences across the partnership.
13. Access to facilities of other organizations.
14. Frequent telephone communication between members of the partnership.
15. Members of the partnership are all the same nationality *[test characteristic]*.

The rankings presented above suggest that characteristics associated with **equality** are of greatest importance to participants. Three of the top four ranked characteristics relate to the affirmation of partners as equals in any science-for-development collaboration. Ensuring equal access to project outputs (e.g., reports, journal articles) (#1) and data generated as part of the partnership (#2) are the factors valued most by those questioned. This is closely followed by the partnership treating all members as equals (#3). Other characteristics associated with this 'equality' theme are ensuring opportunities for co-authorship of research outputs (#7), and opportunity for all members of the partnership to contribute to project design (#9).

Secondary to these 'equality' values are a set of values relating to **resources** and the resourcing of partners. Access to training and capacity building (#3) was prioritised more than access to funding and financial resources (#5), expertise (#11), or facilities (#13). Finally a set of values can be identified which relate to the partnership **process**. Respectful dialogue (#5) and frequent email communications between partnership members ranked relatively highly (#8).

This data synthesis can help to inform partnership development in a Kenyan context. It provides BGS with an understanding of key values to embed within research partnerships, supporting ongoing monitoring and evaluation of whether partnerships remain mutually beneficial. Replication of this research in other countries can help to develop a multi-national perspective on characteristics for effective science-for-development partnerships.


Category:

- OR/17/039 Workshop report: earth and environmental science for sustainable development (Nairobi, March 2017)

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