DEVELOPING RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS IN EMERGING NATIONS: BRIDGING THE "NORTH-SOUTH" DIVIDE

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DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIPS TO ENHANCE GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIP AND STUDENT EXPERIENCES
1. Analyze the Development of Partnership:
   - University of Central Florida, USA (UCF)
   - University of Botswana, Gaborone (UB)

2. Observe Challenges to “N-S” Partnerships

3. Analyze Impact of:
   * Preconceived notions of neocolonialism
   * Working with multiple “Rules of Engagement”
MODES OF INQUIRY & DATA SOURCES

1. Review of Pertinent Literature

2. Analyses of two UCF/UB Grants:
   • (2011) Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad to Botswana
   • (2012-2015) US Dept. of State Grant: Capacity Building Program for US Undergraduate Study Abroad
CHALLENGES TO EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS

- External Threats to Emerging Host University
- Unequal Financial Incentives
- Patterns of Domination or Collaboration
- Over-burdened Host Nation Faculty
- Capacity Development = Participatory Development
- Involvement of All Stakeholders
EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS BEGIN WHEN FACULTY MEET FACE-2-FACE
YET, EQUITABLE COLLABORATION INCLUDES POTENTIAL STUMBLING BLOCKS
ONE PROBLEM: STRAIN ON LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE
THE SOLUTION: ARRIVE DURING VACATION PERIODS
ANOTHER PROBLEM: DISTRACTING FACULTY FROM ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITIES
THE SOLUTION: SHARED RESEARCH BASED ON COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS
ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES TO RECIPROCITY AND COLLABORATION

1. Can You Build a True Consensus Document?

2. Perceptions on Adequate Planning

3. Perceptions of Timeliness & Detailed Planning

4. Appreciating Partner’s Challenges
1. BUILDING A CONSENSUS DOCUMENT: WHOSE DATA/PERSPECTIVES?
1. Equally perceived ownership?  
   Who writes proposals? Who edits? Who cares?

2. If one partner gains more, where is the incentive for a “partnership?”

3. Whose students, faculty gain the most?

4. Need to identify grants with more = outcomes
2. PERCEPTIONS OF ADEQUATE PLANNING: YOU NEVER MADE THOSE RESERVATIONS?!?
WHAT IS “ADEQUATE PRE-PLANNING?”

1. Obsessive Over-Planning vs. Liaise Faire
2. How Much Pre-Planning is Possible/Necessary in an Emerging Nation?
3. Plan All You Want, But Nobody Really Knows What Will Happen Tomorrow!!
THE ITINERARY LISTED “SCHOOL VISIT”
REALITY: VISIT TO ZIMBABWE ROCK RUINS
3. PERCEPTIONS OF TIMELINESS
TIMELINESS: WILL DIVERSE PERCEPTIONS RUIN A PARTNERSHIP AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES?

Multiple Choice: The Term “On Time” Means

a. Whenever I get there.
b. 5 Minutes AFTER scheduled departure.
c. Submission of grant proposal 2 minutes prior to disqualification.
d. Boarding the plane BEFORE door closes.
e. No such concept really exists.
4. APPRECIATING PARTNER’S CHALLENGES: NO, I CAN’T EMAIL. I MUST DRIVE 65 KM ON DIRT ROAD TO ARRANGE SCHOOL VISITS.
Need to appreciate another’s means of achieving desired end results.

Example: Speed of Identifying Rural Schools

UCF’s Perception: UB moving too slowly – can’t you just phone or email??

UB’s Perception: You can’t demand logistical information “at the speed of thunder.” We must travel on rough roads, and meet face to face to achieve desired partnerships with Remote Area Dweller Schools.
SHARING DIVERSE OPINIONS
FINANCIAL HURDLES CAN BE ENORMOUS

Botswana Pula vs. US $
STATUS WITHIN A GOVERNMENT GRANT: RELATIVE STRENGTH AND RESTRICTIONS
INEQUALITY AMONG EQUALS: AN INHERENT PROBLEM WITH NATIONAL GRANTS

*Inequality Inherent in US Federal Grants
  * US Partner Given Control of Budget
    * Budget Managed from US Campus
    * Student Participant Fees Deposited in US Account
  * Int’l. Partner Relegated to Dependent Status
  * Elusive Overhead Funds: Emerging University Needs Significant Cash Reserves
  *“It Takes Money to Make Money”
DUELING ACCOUNTANTS
Whose Accounting Procedures Will Be Followed?

With International Grants, 3+ Accounting Methods to Appease:

- US University’s Finance & Accounting Procedures
- International University’s F&A Procedures
- Funding Agency’s F&A

Who Will Decide the “Official” Day of Currency Exchange/Rate??????

- Thousands of Pula/$ Can be Won/Lost
- Pride in Domestic Currency’s Status
SO WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?
CONCLUDING REMARKS: CRITICAL ATTITUDES AND PERSPECTIVES

* Moving Beyond Assumed Neocolonialism
  * Building an Equitable Partnership
* Succeeding By Adapting Other’s “Rules of Engagement”
* Need to Involve ALL Stakeholders (from University Budget Offices to Village Development Committees)
* Eradicate any “Missionary Zeal” – Batswana DO NOT Need to be Saved from Themselves!
COLLABORATION WITH HOST COMMUNITY:
VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE & PTA
TRUE PARTNERSHIPS ARE POSSIBLE, BUT NOT EASY
THANKS!
TWO PARTNERS FROM UCF AND UB