

MULTIPARTY COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA

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MULTIPARTY COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This paper discusses seven cases of cooperative problem solving by people's organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), governmental agencies, and international donor and development agencies in six Asian countries. The paper seeks to identify when and why such cooperations lead to enduring improvements in intractable development problems, and the implications of those findings for national and international development policy-makers.

2. Problems of social and economic development are often dauntingly complex and interdependent, involving constellations of interacting problems that reinforce each other. Such problems are often intractable to the efforts of any single organization or agency. Multiparty cooperation that involves organizations and groups with diverse resources has emerged in many different settings as a potential strategy for dealing with such problems.

3. This study compares seven cases of multiparty cooperation on a wide range of development problems in six different countries. Casewriters were selected who could gain access to all the parties, and especially to the grassroots participants. Initial drafts of the cases were discussed and analyzed in a conference that brought together casewriters, representatives of grassroots groups, and outside experts. This work provided a basis for the analysis of this paper.

4. This analysis suggested that the evolution of cooperation in the cases needs to be understood in the context of seven themes, including: (a) the historical context, (b) framing the problems, (c) conflict and cooperation, (d) power differences, (e) organizing joint work, (f) expanding impacts and levels of aggregation, and (g) cooperation outcomes.

4a. The historical context provides a critical base for cooperation. Cooperation appeared to be more likely when the parties, and especially government agencies, perceived the situation as a crisis or an opportunity that legitimated experiments with new ideas. Cooperation was also more likely when international actors, like donors or development agencies, proposed it or provided legitimacy to otherwise unacceptable partners.

4b. In most of these cases, cooperation was contingent on reframing the problem to make joint action possible. A minimum condition was frustration and dissatisfaction with past efforts to solve the problem. Initiatives came from many different sources, but the definition of who would be included or excluded in solving the problem often gave rise to extensive conflict and negotiation. The reframing process often turned on catalytic ideas or individuals, who articulated and championed the possibility of new solutions.

4c. Although the cases were selected as examples of cooperation, conflict was common in most of them. The turning points that mark transitions from conflict to cooperation and back were critical in many cases, and it seems clear that parties to such efforts must be prepared to deal with both conflict and cooperation. The cases also suggest that informal relations among representatives of different parties are critical to launching cooperations and to

managing emergent conflicts that threaten to disrupt them.

4d. Since these cooperations involved parties that were very unequal in wealth and power, the potential for power struggles or abuse was always present. Several factors appeared relevant for balancing power differences for effective cooperation, including strong organizations representing low power groups, interests of cooperation of high power groups, and third parties that can balance inequalities. In some of these cases, people's organizations were powerful actors at the outset; in others the cooperation itself contributed to empowering people's organizations and NGOs. In all cases, some degree of mutual empowerment for all the parties seemed associated with successful cooperation.

4e. Although informal relations were important at the outset and during power struggles, more formal agreements were often important to organize joint work. The definition of clear goals and means for attaining them facilitated cooperation among diverse parties. In many cases, bridging organizations emerged or were created to span the differences among parties, especially between grassroots groups and government agencies. Third parties that were external to the issues and often to the countries, like international donors, sometimes played key roles as catalysts and supporters of innovative initiatives.

4f. Initial successes in these projects were often followed by rapid growth that challenged the original assumptions and organizational arrangements of the original collaborating parties. In particular, grassroots groups often found it necessary to create larger organizational forms and strategies that allowed them to work at a level of aggregation that is common for government agencies but rare for grassroots groups. Where people's organizations and NGOs were not able to build organizations appropriate to the needed level of aggregation, they had difficulty in influencing events.

4g. These cooperations produced two kinds of outcomes: problem-solving impacts and social and institutional changes. The solutions to intractable development problems are predictable from the study selection criteria that emphasized success. Less obviously, the cooperations often generated "invisible resources" in the form of energy, creativity, and finances from grassroots groups that might otherwise have remained unavailable. In addition, the cooperations produced social and institutional changes in the capacities of participants, such as increased organizational capacity by people's organizations or new attitudes toward popular participation in government agencies.

5. The discussion of these findings suggests some general concepts that may be helpful in assessing other potential cooperations. Three aspects of potential cooperations that were important in these cases were (a) the actors, (b) the phases of cooperation, and (c) the different forms of cooperation that emerged.

5a. Many different types of actors participated in these cooperations. We adopted terms like stakeholders, parties and constituencies, allies and opponents, third parties and bridging organizations to describe key actors in these cooperations.

5b. The cases also suggested the existence of distinct phases of cooperation. The problem-framing phase involves the reconceptualization of the problem as one that might be affected by cooperative problem-solving. Often this phase takes a long time, particularly when it is

necessary to exclude major parties in order to achieve cooperation. The implementation phase requires more specific definition of how the parties will work together and negotiations over the details of joint action. The expansion or consolidation phase often requires reorganizing to spread or maintain the benefits of cooperation, and frequently involves problems of organizing to deal with larger levels of aggregation.

5c. This analysis suggests that there may be several quite different patterns of interaction that fall under the general term of cooperation. Instrumental cooperation brings together parties who have a clear self-interest in joint action, either from common or dovetailed interests. Participatory cooperation brings grassroots groups together with more wealthy and powerful actors like governments or international donors, and requires the empowerment of low power groups if they are to be mutually influential with other parties. In a third form, here labelled development partnerships, the parties share a common vision for the future and a mutual commitment that leads them to continue cooperation in the absence of, or even in the teeth of obvious instrumental incentives.

6. On the basis of these cases, we have identified seven implications that might be of interest to national and international policy-makers concerned with solving development problems. They include:

- (a) Cooperation can be an effective strategy for difficult problems.
- (b) Cooperation can grow out of crisis.
- (c) Cooperation can be ignited by outside events or agents.
- (d) Cooperation entails conflict and power struggles.
- (e) Cooperation requires bridging organizations and relationships.
- (f) Cooperation can mobilize previously unavailable resources.
- (g) Cooperation can build new institutional attitudes and capacities, especially among people's organizations.

7. The final section of the paper explores some implications for policy-makers interested in promoting future multiparty cooperations of the sort described in these cases. The emphasis here is on implications for national policy-makers and for international donors and development agencies. Many other organizations, such as corporations or universities, might be involved in cooperative problem-solving in other situations.

8. These cases do not suggest that multiparty cooperation is a panacea, appropriate to all situations and problems. They do suggest that carefully constructed alliances among people's organizations, NGOs, government agencies, international donors, and other stakeholders in some situations may make remarkable contributions to solving otherwise intractable development problems.

MULTIPARTY COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA

1. INTRODUCTION

Problems of poverty and social development are often intimidatingly complex. They involve interacting constellations of factors, such as lack of jobs, ill-health, poor education, social and physical isolation, and many others. In many settings it is becoming clear that even large and powerful agencies cannot by themselves create lasting solutions to these problems. In some situations, however, coalitions of organizations -- often organizations known for histories of indifference or antagonism to each other -- have found that multiparty cooperation¹ can solve problems that have been intractable to any of them working alone.

This paper will discuss seven cases of cooperative problem-solving by multiple parties -- people's organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs)², government agencies, international organizations -- in six Asian countries. Each of these cooperations has produced improvements that could not have been accomplished without joint action. The purpose of the comparison is to learn when and why such cooperations lead to enduring improvements. We are particularly interested in examining implications of these experiences for national and international development policy-makers who might foster effective joint problem-solving in the future.

The paper will deal briefly with the nature of intractable development problems and emerging experience with multiparty cooperation for solving them. This discussion will provide the background for describing the questions and the methodologies used in this project. Then the paper will describe issues and patterns that emerge from comparison of the seven cases and some concepts for understanding them. Finally some implications for policy-makers that seek to bridge the chasms among rich and poor, public and private, developing and industrialized areas will be explored.

2. DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS AND COOPERATION

Problems of social and economic development are often dauntingly complex and interdependent. Many are the product of interacting systems of problems that are mutually reinforcing, such as the self-regenerating interactions of poverty, poor health, unemployment, and poor education.³ Understanding and acting effectively to solve such problems may require more resources than are available to any single agency.

Barbara Gray has argued that certain kinds of problems are particularly susceptible to cooperative problem-solving. Such problems share some common characteristics: (1) they are ill-defined or defined in different ways by different parties; (2) they involve interdependent stakeholders with vested interests; (3) their stakeholders are not always easily identified or organized; (4) those stakeholders have disparate power and resources; (5) they have different levels of information and expertise about the problems; (6) the problems are technically complex and uncertain; (7) relations among stakeholders are adversarial; (8) solutions from unilateral or past incremental problem-solving activities have been unsatisfactory, and (9) they

are intractable to existing problem solving processes.⁴ Such problems may require problem-solving processes that can bring together the information of diverse stakeholders for better understanding and the resources of many interdependent actors for effective action.

These characteristics are common in problems of social and economic development. They are also common in the emerging class of "boundaryless problems" that transcend national borders such as desertification, global warming, AIDS, militarization, and refugees. The growing urgency of such problems is one of the defining characteristics of the late Twentieth Century.⁵

At the same time, there is growing disillusionment with existing institutional mechanisms for solving such problems. Market mechanisms emphasize competition as the underlying dynamic for problem-solving. Markets have been highly efficient in providing some goods and services, but it is clear that "market failures" make them less appropriate mechanisms for solving some kinds of problems, especially those that involve people without economic resources.⁶ Competitive processes tend to produce adversarial relations among key actors, and stakeholders with fewer resources fare less well in such struggles.

Government institutions provide mechanisms for social problem solving based on hierarchical control and command rather than price competition. As engines of social development and the source of solutions for poverty problems, however, government institutions have also been disappointing. During the last decade there has been a substantial challenge to government mechanisms that are subject to "organizational failures" as catalysts of development.⁷ Command and control processes tend to produce dependence and passivity among those subjected to them, and that dependence is particularly destructive of grassroots energies and capacities for problem-solving.

Indeed, too much reliance on any sector seems to produce results that are inconsistent with lasting improvements in complex social problems. Reliance on market mechanisms without countervailing forces produces oligopolies and monopolies that do not serve the interests of many citizens. There is a tendency to centralize wealth and power in a few corporations that then respond sluggishly if at all to public interests. Over-reliance on government institutions centralizes power in government bureaucracies that are also subject to institutional giantism and rigidity.

Cooperation offers problem-solving processes and associated institutional forms that are fundamentally different from the competition of the market and the control of the state hierarchy.⁸ It involves explicit recognition of the interdependence among the parties and the search for solutions that respect interdependence while responding to diverse interests. In organizational terms, cooperation suggests the importance of organizational arrangements that bridge the interests of different parties. The parties to a cooperative process surrender some degree of organizational autonomy to their joint venture, but they preserve a degree of freedom intermediate between the price-guided latitude of the market and the circumscribed space of the organizational hierarchy.

Over the last decade there has been a marked rise in the use of cooperative mechanisms for solving intractable problems in a variety of different settings. There is a growing pattern of

response to interdependence and its associated problems where unilateral action may exacerbate rather than solve problems. Indeed, in interdependent situations, efforts to dominate or to pursue a totally autonomous path are almost inevitably problematic. There is some evidence that cooperative strategies are effective even in highly competitive situations.⁹

Among corporations, for example, there is much concern with new organizational strategies and forms fitted to the increased rigors of international competition. Organization theorists have suggested that "dynamic networks" of relatively small and specialized organizations, that can be quickly organized around a common project and then re-coalesce in a different pattern for future work, is a major new organizational form.¹⁰ An example is a team of specialized contractors that undertake a large construction task with coordination by a general contractor. Such networks can quickly adapt to emerging market demands, and effectively use specialized resources that the general contractor cannot afford to employ on a permanent basis.

Cooperative problem-solving is also increasingly common among public and private organizations facing complex community problems. In many communities in the United States, for example, "public-private partnerships" work on problems of youth employment, renewal of educational systems, and urban redevelopment.¹¹ These are all problems in which the performance of corporations or government agencies by themselves has been disappointing.

A third area of increased cooperative problem-solving is on international issues where national boundaries are essentially irrelevant to the problem. Since the nations involved are typically unwilling to give up much sovereignty, working out a cooperative arrangement to attack the problems is the only alternative to ignoring them. The 1992 UN Conference on the Environment, for example, is an effort to bring together resources to work on problems that affect the whole world, but cannot be solved by single nations. Regional conferences on desertification, drugs, refugees and health matters (e.g., AIDS) are also arenas in which international cooperation is required.

Finally, cooperations that span diverse perspectives and great disparities in power and wealth are emerging to work on development issues. It is difficult to create cooperation across organizational and sectoral differences that have histories of adversarial struggles; it is still more difficult to collaborate when the parties see themselves as unequally powerful or unequally at risk. In Bangladesh government agencies, NGOs and international donors continue to work together on income-generating projects, in spite of their mutually negative perceptions of each other, in what one analyst refers to as "antagonistic cooperation."¹² Nonetheless, cooperations that mobilize the perspectives and resources of different sectors and the energy and creativity of different social levels can create extraordinary results. The Savings Development Movement of Zimbabwe, for example, used a simple technology and contacts with government Ministries to orchestrate grassroots financial and agricultural development programs. This effort improved the quality for life of hundreds of thousands of villagers in a few years.¹³ It is increasingly clear that building local institutional bases that can work effectively with existing institutions is essential if the benefits of development activities are to be sustainable.¹⁴

In short, cooperation on problem-solving that mobilizes resources from many sectors and many levels of society can be a powerful force for development. For many reasons, however, such

cooperation is the exception rather than the rule. This research seeks to understand more about why and how such cooperations are successful.

3. QUESTIONS AND METHODS

This study seeks to identify factors that support cooperation among grassroots people's organizations, NGOs, government agencies, international donors and many other parties. We chose to develop case studies of cooperations that could be examined comparatively. This strategy does not offer the in-depth information about cooperation dynamics available from a more longitudinal approach, nor does it permit the generalizations possible from a more representative sample of cases. On balance, however, given the state of knowledge at the moment and the complexity of the situations to be examined, a comparative analysis of successful cases seems appropriate.¹⁵

In the interest of getting a broad cross-section of cooperative activities, cases were selected to meet two basic criteria:

1. Cooperations that involved people's organizations, non-governmental organizations, government agencies, and others; and
2. Cooperations whose outcomes benefitted poor populations.

The cases represent a wide variety of poverty problems; from sanitation to alternative energy sources; from immunization to employment; from urban renewal to industrial renewal. We chose to include a variety of issues and countries in order to identify patterns that would have relevance to many diverse settings.

The casewriters sought answers to common questions about each case. They collected data about the historical context of the case, how it became a focus for cooperation, how relations among the parties evolved, and the outcomes of the cooperation. They were also asked to identify the most important lessons and implications of the case.

Table 1 describes the seven cases selected. These cases were identified through discussions with leaders of nongovernmental organizations, multilateral and bilateral development agencies, and government officials in the countries involved. Table 1 describes the problem, the parties, and the primary results of the cooperation for each case.

Getting information about the processes and perceptions underlying the evolution of these cooperations was not simple, particularly since some of the most important information was held by relatively poor and powerless groups. For such groups frank discussion of views that might offend powerful parties can be risky. We sought casewriters who as individuals and as representatives of local institutions would have credibility with many parties, and especially with poor groups. We asked them to ask probing questions, to write up the results in ways that would capture diverse perspectives where they existed, and to share initial drafts with the various parties.

The data collection process involved several steps. The general sequence followed by most involved:

1. Casewriters workshop to agree on research questions and methods.
2. Casewriters prepare and share first draft with parties and research coordinators.
3. Case conference held to discuss cases and lessons to be learned from comparisons.
4. Cases redrafted with input from conference and further discussions.
5. Followup with parties in some cases as agreed by casewriters and their institutions.

This sequence allowed several opportunities for gathering more data and interpretations as drafts were prepared. The case conference was attended by representatives of low-power parties to the cases as well as the casewriters, so information was available on key issues from the grassroots perspective. Data collection was an iterative process that allowed testing and elaborating initial understanding of case events by many parties. The resulting cases presented multiple perspectives on some controversial issues. It was stipulated that drafts were subject to publication veto by parties who felt that their perspectives were distorted or inadequately represented.

Table 1: Cases of Cooperation

Case	Major Actors	Outcomes
Bangladesh Immunization Program: to provide expanded immunization program for children throughout the country.	GO: Public Health agencies NGO: BRAC, CARE, ADAB, many others DO: WHO, UNICEF, World Bank Other: Media, corporations, celebrities	Child immunization rates from 2% in 1985 to 80% in 1990; Child mortality down 20%; Improved relations between GO-NGO workers; Training for GO workers; More local awareness and action on health issues.
Indian Biogas Program: to build biogas plants for poor rural families.	GO: National and state energy agencies NGO: AFPRO, Gram Vikas DO: Canadian Hunger Foundation Other: Banks	Built 45,000 new biogas plants for poor families in Orissa; Demonstrated potential for GO-NGO cooperation; Expanded capacity of NGOs to carry out large programs.
Indian Workers Initiative: to revive and make profitable a "sick" plant closed by its owners.	GO: National and State financial institutions; Supreme Court PO: Kamani Employees Union Other: Kamani family; media	Reopened plant and reemployed 600 workers; Became profitable earlier than predicted; Twenty similar initiatives in three years; Started Workers' Management Centre to support other initiatives.
Indonesian Irrigation Program: to turn responsibility for system maintenance over to local farmers.	GO: Irrigation Directorate; Dept of Public Works; Planning Commission NGO: Universities, LP3ES, PO: Water Users DO: Ford Foundation, USAID	New policy adopted for local control of small irrigation systems; New water user associations organized; Large cost reduction for system maintenance; Improved government attitudes to local participation in managing systems.

<p>Malaysian Youth Technology Centers: to encourage rural youth to undertake local economic activities.</p>	<p>GO: Ministry of Youth and Sports; district officials NGO: Village technology centers PO: Village youth clubs, farmer organizations DO: UN Volunteers</p>	<p>Plans for establishing 200 centers throughout the country; New agribusinesses in 32 existing centers; New leadership among youth.</p>
<p>Pakistan Urban Sanitation Program: to build sewage systems in Karachi slum areas.</p>	<p>GO: National and municipal agencies NGO: Orangi Pilot Project PO: "Lane organizations;" All-Orangi United Federation DO: ADB, UNICEF, World Bank Other: BCCI Foundation</p>	<p>Built more than 64,000 latrines, 4,000 sewage lines, and 300 secondary drains; Residents bear more than 90% of cost, which is 1/6 of the commercial price; 166 new lane organizations formed, and they undertake other initiatives. OPP provides technical support to other areas.</p>
<p>Philippines Urban Upgrading: to improve housing and other facilities in Manila slum area.</p>	<p>GO: National Housing Authority; barangays. NGO: Philippine Ecumenical Committee for Community Organization (PECCO) PO: Zone One Tondo Organizations (ZOTO); UGNAYAN (coalition of people's organizations) DO: World Bank</p>	<p>Established title of homeowners to land in Tondo Foreshore; Upgraded facilities and self-help to improve 90% of housing; Strengthened ZOTO and demonstrated influence on projects; Trained new generation of grassroots activists; Seed for national urban coalition of peoples' organizations.</p>

(GO: government organization; NGO: non-governmental organization; PO: people's organization; DO: donor organization)

4. THE EVOLUTION OF COOPERATION

Some themes appeared in many cases. This section identifies themes that are relevant to understanding how and why multiparty cooperation is likely to be successful. Our analysis suggests that several areas deserve attention: (a) the historical context, (b) framing the problems, (c) handling conflict and cooperation, (d) managing power differences, (e) organizing joint work, (f) expanding impacts and levels of aggregation, and (g) cooperation outcomes.

4a. Historical Context

It seems clear that the historical context is very important to the emergence of cooperative problem-solving. Two contextual factors are particularly important: (1) political, economic, and cultural factors that encourage cooperation, and (2) the influence of international agencies concerned with development.

The political, economic, and cultural contexts of these cases are quite varied. Some take place under military regimes or single-party states; others in constitutional democracies. Some occur in extremely poor countries; others in middle-income nations. The countries have varied cultural traditions: South Asian or Southeast Asian; Hindu; Muslim; or largely Catholic. While it is difficult to identify single factors associated with increased chances of collaboration in this sample of cases, it does appear that constellations of contextual factors in many cases created for key actors, and especially for government agencies, a *sense of crisis* that encouraged experiments with new ideas. Thus, for example:

India has thousands of sick industries, and the policy of state takeovers to save jobs has been a financial disaster. The union's offer to rejuvenate Kamani Tubes Limited, using pension funds and "sweat equity" of workers, provided an innovative solution to a problem that affects hundreds of companies and millions of workers. The support from national banks and other government agencies reflected their hope that the union might contribute an innovative solution to an increasingly serious problem for government policy-makers.¹⁶

Bangladesh has one of the world's highest child mortality rates, and 30% of those deaths are linked to lack of immunizations. Officials responsible for carrying out a Presidential commitment to immunize 85% of the nation's children by 1990 found that programs existing in 1985 reached 2%. More importantly, hard-headed analysis in cooperation with WHO and UNICEF showed that government resources were inadequate to meet the deadline without extensive cooperation from many other agencies with active programs at the grassroots.¹⁷

In some cases, as in Bangladesh, the sense of crisis led to a government initiative to promote cooperation. In other cases, the initiative was taken by other parties, but government recognition of a crisis, as in India, provided compelling arguments for supporting that initiative.

Sometimes the context presents an *opportunity* rather than a crisis. Opportunities that require cooperation can spark new behavior. The rise of new ideas and new development

technologies may provide previously unrecognized opportunities for joint work, and so act as powerful stimuli for cooperation.

In Indonesia, for example, the decline in oil revenues and the reluctance of outside donors to fund the maintenance of irrigation systems set the stage for a policy shift from government to water user control over small irrigation systems. Studies by university social scientists and visits to locally-controlled irrigation systems in the Philippines offered an opportunity to promote innovation in managing small irrigation systems.¹⁸

The role of *international actors* is quite important in some of these cases, either as catalysts or supporters of initiatives. For example:

In the Philippines, people's organizations had struggled for years with the national government over land titles, city services, and resettlement and demolition policies. When the World Bank expressed interest in financing urban renewal in Manila in the mid-70s, the government hoped the project would be the first in a long series. A network of local people's organizations, ZOTO, had a tradition of effective public demonstrations. While the Marcos regime in other circumstances shut off protest, ZOTO was able to build links to Bank staff and mount public protests against initial plans. Eventually the parties found that negotiating shared goals, joint planning, and shared implementation allowed mutual gains not available from more adversarial tactics.¹⁹

Quite apart from interventions into specific issues, international agency interest can provide legitimacy to cooperation. The international concern with child immunization represented by WHO and UNICEF in the Bangladesh campaign reminded the parties of the program's visibility in the international community. The World Bank's concern with popular participation exerted pressure on the Marcos regime to moderate its actions to suppress ZOTO. Ideas from the Ford Foundation influenced decisions in Indonesia by redefining the potentials of water user organizations in irrigation system management. External agencies were important in identifying solutions to crises or new opportunities and in providing legitimacy to grassroots groups as well as in providing resources to explore promising innovations.

Table 2 summarizes the presence of crises and opportunities and the roles of external agencies in the seven cases. Note that in all but one of these cases, there was some evidence that government recognition of a crisis or an opportunity encouraged their support of joint activity. In all but one of the cases international actors played some sort of role by providing support, ideas, technical assistance or legitimacy to the parties involved. The operation of political, economic and cultural factors in the larger context to create government and international awareness of serious problems were important factors in most of these cases.

Table 2: Historical Context

Case	Government recognized crisis or opportunity?	International Actors?
Bangladesh Immunization Program	Yes: Government cannot meet immunization goals without help	WHO; UNICEF; World Bank encourage NGO participation.
Indian Biogas Program	Yes: Deforestation is a major problem; lack of fuel for cooking.	Canadian Hunger Foundation supports NGO participation
Indian Workers Initiative	Yes: "Sick" industries are endemic and state takeover policy is financial burden.	None
Indonesian Irrigation Program	Yes: Government short of resources to maintain systems.	Ford Foundation; USAID
Malaysian Youth Technology Centers	Yes: Concern with rural emigration to urban centers	UN Volunteers provide technical support to Centers
Pakistan Urban Sanitation Program	No: Government focused on other priorities	BCCI Foundation initial support; World Bank, UNICEF, WHO support later
Philippines Urban Upgrading	Yes: Concern with slum renewal and World Bank support	World Bank supports project and PO participation

4b. Framing the Problem

The world is full of problems whose solutions demand the resources of many organizations. The world is not full of cooperative problem-solving. Why and how did these situations become seen as opportunities for joint action by diverse groups, and particularly by groups that have histories of antagonism or indifference?

Dissatisfaction with past and present problem-solving mechanisms and a sense of crisis or opportunity is probably a minimum condition. In most of these cases existing mechanisms were not working and many parties recognized that failure. But dissatisfaction is not enough for automatic exploration of cooperative problem-solving, especially if the parties blame each other for the breakdown of standard mechanisms. At least three factors influenced how problems were reframed in these cases: (1) initiatives for cooperation, (2) catalytic individuals and ideas, and (3) definition or redefinition of parties relevant to problem-solving.

The *initiative for joint action* came from many different sources in these cases. The Bangladesh Immunization Program, the Indian Biogas Program, and the Malaysian Youth Technology Centers were government initiatives, with some provision for cooperation with NGOs or people's organizations. In other situations, the initiative came from NGOs like the

Orangi Pilot Project in Pakistan, or from people's organizations, such as the Indian workers or the Philippine urban coalition. How the problem is framed, not surprisingly, turns considerably on the perspectives of the agency that takes the initiative. But the potential for cooperation turns on how other parties came to influence or accept the framing.

The reframing process was also influenced by *catalytic ideas or individuals*. These catalysts helped to articulate a new vision around which diverse partners could collaborate and inspired commitment to working out their differences. In many circumstances individuals are critical.

The idea of building sanitation facilities in the slums of Karachi grew from the vision of self-reliant development and the personal credibility of Akhter Hameed Khan. The BCCI Foundation supported him and his colleagues to work with slum communities to define local concerns and needs. The resulting trust and shared vision was crucial to the cooperation between the NGO and the slum communities, and later to the project's impact in other areas.²⁰

The leadership of the union was crucial to the workers' initiative to take over Kamani Tubes Limited. Worker management and ownership of the plant would not have been plausible without vision and reputations of the two leaders. They built their credibility with key financial institutions while preserving the loyalty of union membership during years of privation and disappointment.

In both these cases individuals were critical to reframing the problem to include the new partners and enable cooperative problem solving. Both these cases involved radically new approaches and they both involved empowerment of previously oppressed groups. It may be that strong individual leaders are particularly essential to such situations.

In other cases, new ideas served as catalysts for reframing the problem. Individuals were important advocates of the ideas, but the reframing seems more linked to the idea than to the personal characteristics and credibility of an individual.

In Malaysia, the idea of the Youth Technology Centers germinated from a trip to Africa by a senior Ministry of Youth official, who saw such centers in operation there. The idea was then thoroughly discussed at a UNV Regional Conference in Kuala Lumpur. In the context of the large scale rural-to-urban youth migration in Malaysia, such centers offered the nucleus of a program to improve the quality of life for youth in villages and reduce their emigration to the rapidly expanding cities. While the official himself helped to launch the centers, the idea seems to have been central as a catalyst for cooperation among village youth clubs and government agencies.²¹

In Indonesia many parties worked to promote water user control over small irrigation systems. The idea of farmer participation emerged from many sources: the studies of university social scientists; the experiences of the Ford Foundation; the visit of government officials to the Philippine National Irrigation Authority programs. This idea helped to organize the joint work of government agencies, NGOs, and funders with water users over several years.

One advantage of ideas as catalysts is that the cooperation is less dependent on a single individual, and there are fewer problems of succession if the catalytic individual moves on to some new issue. The disadvantage is that such ideas must be framed in compelling and convincing terms, which is difficult if they are highly controversial or untested at the outset.

The way the problem is framed depends on who participates in the process. *Defining who is relevant* to solving the problem is often much less simple than it appears. It may require reexamining strongly held assumptions about roles and responsibilities, and challenging longstanding perspectives about who should be involved. In some cases, redefinition may require *including* parties previously considered irrelevant.

In Bangladesh, for example, President Ershad committed his Government to meet the WHO target of immunization for 85% of the children by 1990 in a speech to the UN General Assembly. Within the year government officials recognized that they could not reach that goal without massive support from international, national, and local NGOs. Relations between the government and the NGOs were marked by tension and conflict, so this redefinition of who should be involved was difficult for both, it was also crucial to the eventual success of the cooperation, which ultimately involved 1300 organizations all over the country.

Redefining the relevant parties is particularly difficult when there is a history of conflict among them. In Bangladesh, for example, NGO leaders were criticized by their colleagues for associating with government organizations. The government has long been suspicious of the political aspirations of NGOs, some of whom deliver more services to the grassroots than do their government counterparts. It requires vision and courage on both sides to recast each other as potential partners.

In other circumstances, cooperation may require *excluding* parties who would ordinarily be seen as participants. This kind of redefinition may also provoke resistance.

The rejuvenation of Kamani Tubes Limited in India required years of struggle by the union to wrest control of plant assets from the Kamani family. Reopening the plant required cooperation between the union, the Industrial Development Bank of India, the Bureau for Financial and Industrial Reconstruction, and the Supreme Court of India to overcome the resistance of the Kumani family. The union leadership was attacked by other union leaders for their interest in taking over management roles in the plant, even though there was no hope of their members regaining their jobs without such a radical step.

The struggle to bring together relevant parties reflects common intellectual and political resistance to change in social arrangements. The more unconventional the proposed partnership, the more serious resistance can be expected.

Table 3 summarizes the case experience with these issues. While many agencies acted as initiators and catalysts for cooperative problem-solving in these cases, it appears that the setting may be an important influence on which agencies take the lead. In the four cases of rural cooperation -- Bangladesh, Indian Biogas, Indonesia and Malaysia -- government

organizations played initiating roles. In the three urban cases -- India Workers, Pakistan, and Philippines -- people's organizations and NGOs were initiators and catalysts for reframing the problem to enable joint action.

Table 3: Framing the Problem

Case	Redefinition of Actors	Initiative and Catalyst
Bangladesh Immunization Program	Include NGOs in planning and implementing government program	GO initiates around core idea of "Vaccinate your Child!"
Indian Biogas Program	Include NGOs in planning and implementing government program	GO initiates as national program.
Indian Workers Initiative	Exclude Kamani family from control; Include workers in ownership and control.	PO initiates with union leader playing catalytic role
Indonesian Irrigation Program	Include water users in managing irrigation systems; include NGOs, DOs in policy planning	GO and others initiate around catalytic idea of local management of irrigation system
Malaysian Youth Technology Centers	Include youth clubs in project implementation	GO initiates catalytic idea of Youth Technology Center
Pakistan Urban Sanitation Program	Exclude All-Orangi United Federation; Include lane organizations in project definition and implementation	NGO initiates with its leader playing catalytic role
Philippines Urban Upgrading	Include people's organizations in project definition and planning	PO initiates joint action with concept of local participation affecting Bank cooperation

4c. Conflict and Cooperation

Although the emphasis in selecting the cases was on cooperation across organizational and sectoral differences, the actual cases make it clear that cooperation is often associated with conflict. Indeed, given contexts of crisis and scarcity, the relations between such diverse actors are probably more often characterized by conflict than by cooperation. Two themes related to conflict and cooperation bear discussion here: (1) the rise of important conflicts in the course of the cooperation, and (2) the ways in which that conflict was managed.

The oscillation between conflict and cooperation appears in many of these cases. An important issue in starting and maintaining cooperation is recognizing that conflicts are very likely to arise. This is especially true when the parties have histories of adversarial relations. Some cooperations actually grew out of long histories of conflict.

The struggle between government agencies and people's organizations in the urban slums of Manila went on for decades. There was no single moment of transition from conflict to cooperation, but people's organizations like ZOTO and UGNAYAN gradually developed cooperative relations with local government (barangay) leaders and also negotiated agreements on urban upgrading projects with the World Bank and the National Housing Authority. The people's organizations were able to mount large public demonstrations, including one against lack of grassroots participation in urban development projects while the President of the World Bank was speaking in favor of such participation. Suppression by the Marcos regime might have ended Bank interest in urban redevelopment projects in the Philippines, so the government eventually moved to limited cooperation with the people's organization.

In this case, early struggles led to a series of turning points as the World Bank and the government decided to negotiate aspects of the urban upgrading project. Although there was agreement to collaborate on some aspects of the project, both sides retained the option of returning to conflict strategies when they felt it necessary.

In other cases, successful cooperations turned into conflict at various points. These conflicts grew out of old issues, or even sprang from the success of the cooperation itself.

The Indian Biogas Program was exceptionally successful in the state of Orissa, largely because of the cooperation between the state government department and Gram Vikas, a large NGO that built most of the biogas plants in the state. The first several years of the program were highly successful, in part because of the close relationship between the head of the department and the chief executive of Gram Vikas. After several years, however, the department head was transferred and conflict broke out over late payments, divisions of credit for the program's success, and the dominant position of Gram Vikas. These differences proved difficult to resolve at the state level, and for some time the program continued under the coordination of a national NGO headquartered in New Delhi rather than the state agency.²²

These experiences suggest that cooperation and conflict go hand in hand. Parties to such

cooperations should probably be prepared for *either* conflict or cooperation. This expectation puts a premium on skills for managing conflict and renegotiating agreements without threatening the base for continued cooperation, unless the parties conclude that they can do better without each other.

Several patterns of managing conflicts recur in these cases. Particularly common are informal contacts among the parties and the use of third parties, especially national or international agencies that can be seen are relatively neutral.

In some cases, *informal relations* among representatives are very important. Informal contacts may be central to the establishment of cooperation in the first place. The first head of the Biogas Program Department in Orissa had been an intern at the NGO Gram Vikas and so invited them to participate in the program, and relations with the state agency began to deteriorate after he left. The response to that deterioration involved calling on informal relations among key actors in coordinating NGOs and government agencies at the national level to keep the program operating. Many university classmates of the leader of Gram Vikas, for example, were highly placed civil servants, who could help with information or contacts even after conflict with the state government had escalated.

The availability of informal contacts can permit exchanges of views that enable mutual influence without individuals being forced to prematurely lock themselves into unpopular or controversial stands. The lack of overt conflict in the Indonesian and Malaysian cases may be due less to the absence of fundamental differences than to extensive informal discussions that prevented polarization and overt disagreements.

In Indonesia new policies that would turn control of small irrigation systems over to water users were discussed informally at great length and tested in the field prior to any action. University studies of the problem and visits to other countries provided opportunities for many actors to examine the ideas, as did extensive field pretesting of different alternatives. Many people and organizations commented on drafts of the policy, and so influenced the final version. This process allowed the inclusion of many different perspectives as well as informal diffusion of responsibility and credit for the new policy. Such widespread informal consultation processes can build trust among the diverse parties and reduce the risks to any single actor in the process of policy formulation and adoption.

Many parties to the cooperations made use of *third parties* to help manage conflicts. Third parties could provide information, resources, and neutral perspectives that allowed the regulation or resolution of conflicts among primary parties. In some cases third party interventions formally resolved issues. In the struggle between the Kamani family and the Kamani Employees Union, for example, the Supreme Court of India rendered a judgment that ended the Kamani's role in the plant. Prior to that judgment, several different government agencies, like the Bureau for Financial and Industrial Reconstruction, provided assessments of proposed plans that were critical to moving the cooperation forward.

In other situations, third parties provided alternative ways of dealing with deadlocked negotiations. The struggle between the Orissa state agency and Gram Vikas threatened to

paralyze the biogas program until it was agreed that coordination would be handled by a national non-governmental agency. In principle third parties can mediate disputes so that the parties find ways to use their differences constructively, as well as provide alternative points for decision-making. To some extent, the World Bank may have played this role in the urban renewal struggle between government agencies and the networks of Philippine people's organizations.

Table 4 summarizes the presence of overt conflict in these cases and some of the ways in which those conflicts were managed. In five of the seven cases, overt conflict among potential parties to cooperation was an important issue at some point, and the lack of overt conflict in the Malaysian and Indonesian cases may reflect cultural patterns and extensive use of informal discussions as much as the lack of fundamental differences among the parties. In these cases informal contacts and the use of third parties seemed common approaches to managing conflicts. Political and social settings that offer a range of different institutional actors with a lot of informal contacts among their members may be particularly good settings for promoting such cooperations.

Table 4: Conflict and Cooperation

Case	Serious Conflict Issues?	How Conflicts Managed?
Bangladesh Immunization Program	Yes: Tensions between GO and NGO workers over implementation	Agreements among GO and NGO leaders; informal contacts among workers.
Indian Biogas Program	Yes: Struggle between State GO and NGO over resources and credit for program.	Contacts among NGO leader and GO officials; National NGO as alternative program coordinator.
Indian Workers Initiative	Yes: Struggle between union and Kamani family over control of the plant	Informal contacts among union leaders, financial agencies, media; Interventions by financial agencies and Supreme Court.
Indonesian Irrigation Program	No: Little overt conflict in the cooperation	Extensive informal consultations prevent overt conflict?
Malaysian Youth Technology Centers	No: Little overt conflict in the cooperation	Extensive informal consultations prevent overt conflict?
Pakistan Urban Sanitation Program	Yes: Struggle over control between NGO and Municipal GO	Intervention by international DOs resolves in favor of NGO.
Philippines Urban Upgrading	Yes: Struggle between POs, GOs and World Bank over control of project	Bank presses for negotiations between GO and PO; Informal PO contacts with Bank and GO staff help negotiation.

4d. Power Differences

These cases involve grassroots groups interacting with government officials and other powerful figures, so there are often major power differences among some parties. Power differences are often problematic in such situations, since they tend to restrict information flow and tilt decision-making to the more powerful party.²³ This section will focus on three issues: (1) the existence of power struggles, (2) factors that enabled balancing power differences for cooperative action, and (3) the impacts of participation on relatively low-power parties.

Struggles over power were visible early in some of these cases. In India, the struggle between workers and owners over control of the Kamani plant was central to its rejuvenation. In the Philippines, the contest among people's organizations, the government and the World Bank over who would shape the future of the Tondo Foreshore area was a power struggle from the outset. It is probably not accidental that power struggles appear early where people's organizations, like ZOTO and the Kamani Employees Union, are organized to press their interests against those of other powerful actors, like the National Housing Authority and the Kamani family. Less visible conflict may reflect fewer conflicts of interest among unequal parties, or it may indicate that conflicts remain covert when there are no strong people's organizations.

In some cases, power struggles emerged later in the cooperation. Sometimes these struggles appeared to be a consequence of the success of the cooperation experience.

In the Indian biogas program a struggle evolved between the state agency and Gram Vikas over the distribution of resources and credit. Gram Vikas had emerged as the dominant producer of biogas plants in the State, and they were more powerful in relation to the state agency than they had been at the outset. When new leadership took over the state agency, relations with Gram Vikas deteriorated seriously.

In Karachi the success of the Orangi Pilot Project in mobilizing grassroots resources to improve sanitation facilities brought attention from international agencies and from the government. OPP had intentionally maintained a low profile with government agencies, since low cost methods of sanitation potentially threatened powerful government and corporate interests. But they deadlocked with state government officials rather than accept bureaucratic rules for further projects that would undermine the power of local communities. The deadlock was resolved when outside funders supported OPP and bypassed the state bureaucracy.

For both Gram Vikas and the Orangi Pilot Project, the success of the cooperation enhanced their power vis-a-vis government agencies and provided the base for more assertive challenges than they could have mounted at the beginning. Where successful cooperation changes power balances, previously suppressed conflicts of interest can erupt in power struggles among the parties.

Discrepancies in power among the parties posed issues in many cases, and several different *power-balancing factors* appeared to be useful in "leveling the playing field" among them. In some cases strong organizations representing low power parties played critical roles in

balancing power differences. Thus ZOTO in the Philippines was willing and able to challenge Government plans and to get widespread visibility for their concerns. The Kamani Employees Union used its resources to support the unemployed workers and to protect the plant until their proposals could be assessed and accepted by critical decision-makers. The lane organizations in Karachi became important actors in the Karachi sanitation project since they provided much of the labor and resources to carry it out. Sources of strength of such organizations included ability to mobilize local resources, willingness to challenge more powerful parties, sophistication about how to gain and wield political influence, and informal relations that enabled them to gain access to information and credibility with powerful actors.

In many cases power differences were in part balanced by the interests of high power parties in cooperating with low power parties. The Government of Bangladesh was committed to increasing child immunization but needed the resources of many other parties to do so. The Government of Indonesia was concerned about financing the maintenance of small irrigation systems, and so needed the support of water user associations. The Government of Malaysia was concerned with providing economic opportunities for young people in the villages to reduce emigration to the cities. Thus they were willing to be influenced by relatively low power parties if it would help solve the problem.

A third balancing factor was the intervention of third parties that enabled mutual influence by otherwise unequal parties. The sympathy of some World Bank staff and the interest of Bank leadership in grassroots participation helped even the odds between the people's organizations and the Government of the Philippines. The Kamani Employees Union worked with the media and several government agencies in their struggle with the Kamani family, and ultimately took their case to the Supreme Court to gain control of the plant. A balancing role that helped communications among unequal parties was played by WHO and UNICEF in Bangladesh, by the Ford Foundation in Indonesia, and by the UN Volunteers in Malaysia. These third parties could provide legitimacy and support to positions of low power groups that might have otherwise been ignored.

Did participation in these projects empower participants, especially lower power participants? The results in these cases are mixed, but there is some reason to believe that people's organizations and NGOs increased their ability to influence other parties through their participation.

For people's organizations, participation strengthened several existing organizations, as in the Philippines and India Workers cases. Indeed, in the Philippines it appears that the experience influenced a generation of urban organizers and people's organizations. In other cases, the cooperation created or strengthened new people's organizations. The Pakistan Sanitation Program created scores of "lane organizations" that went on to tackle other issues. The Indonesian Irrigation Project started many water user associations to manage their own irrigation systems. In still other cases, people's organizations were less influenced by the experience of cooperation. The Bangladesh Immunization Program benefitted individuals, though the movement also encouraged some grassroots awareness and action for improved health services. The Indian Biogas program served individual families, and so did not directly strengthen people's organizations.

For NGOs, participation in these projects was also often an empowering experience. NGOs were critical actors in the Pakistan, Indonesian, Bangladesh, and India Biogas cases, and their participation appeared to strengthen their capacity for playing important roles in the future. The cooperations empowered low-power groups whose participation was essential to solving the problems. The resources of slum residents in the Philippines were vital to upgrading the area; the resources of union members were essential to rehabilitating Kamani Tubes Limited; the resources of Karachi slum residents were crucial to building better sanitation systems. Where the problem made the roles of NGOs more critical, as in the Indian biogas program and the Bangladesh immunization campaign, NGOs were empowered as much as or more than people's organizations.

Table 5 summarizes the occurrence of these patterns in the seven cases. Power struggles appear to be important factors in five of the seven. There was some evidence of power-balancing factors at work in all the cases. Power struggles were involved in all three cases that produced high empowerment outcomes for people's organizations, and also in two cases that empowered NGOs. Not so obviously, some cases of moderate empowerment occurred without overt power struggles. Power gains may sometimes be possible for several parties simultaneously, and so not require struggles over redistribution.

Table 5: Power Differences

Case	Power Struggles?	Power Balancing Factors?	PO and NGO Consequences?
Bangladesh Immunization Program	Mid: GO and NGO staff over program control	NGOs can reach grassroots; GO interest in immunization; WHO, UNICEF as interested third parties.	PO: Low: Minor changes. NGO: High: Increased roles for many NGOs.
Indian Biogas Program	Mid: NGO vs State GO about resources and credit	Gram Vikas can reach poor; GO concern with new energy; Canadian Hunger Foundation support for program.	PO: Low: Few PO effects. NGO: High: Gram Vikas grows in capacity.
Indian Workers Initiative	Early: Union vs. Kamani Family over plant control	Union represents workers; GO interest in sick industries; Supreme Court as third party.	PO: High: Union stronger via plant reopening. NGO: Low: not involved.
Indonesian Irrigation Program	None explicit	NGO research and training for farmers and GO officials; GO interest in reduced costs; Ford Foundation support for new ideas.	PO: Med: Create new user organizations. NGO: High: Increased LP3ES credibility with GO, farmers.
Malaysian Youth Technology Centers	None explicit	Youth clubs provide labor; GO promotes local jobs; UN volunteers provide technical assistance.	PO: Med: Strengthen economic roles of youth clubs. NGO: Low: not involved.
Pakistan Urban Sanitation Program	Mid: NGO vs. State GO on control of program activity	Lane organizations give labor; GOs not initially involved; NGO technical assistance; Foundation financial support.	PO: High: Lane groups take on new tasks. NGO: High: Expand to serve other areas.
Philippines Urban Upgrading	Early: POs vs. GO and World Bank on program definition	ZOTO represents local people; GO wants more Bank support; World Bank support local participation.	PO: High: Strengthens urban PO networks. NGO: Med: Encourages urban organizing.

4e. Organizing Joint Work

While informal relations were often central to the cooperation in these cases, more formally-defined structures and processes that supported joint work were also critical. At least three organizational aspects of these cases seem important: (1) the definition of specific ends and means, (2) the role of bridging organizations, and (3) the roles of external third parties.

Many of these cases were organized around agreements on *specific goals and means* that guided the allocation of responsibilities and allowed measurement of success or failure. In Pakistan, success could be measured in numbers of latrines and sewers constructed; in India the quality and number of biogas plants manufactured was easily assessed; in Bangladesh the immunization programs could be easily defined. Where goals and technologies can be well-specified, it is easier to define and assign roles that use the special resources of the partners. In Bangladesh the special resources of the NGOs, the government agencies, and WHO and UNICEF could be described and integrated into the overall plan. When goals and responsibilities are more generally defined, as in some of the activities of the Youth Technology Clubs in Malaysia or some of the urban upgrading activities in the Philippines, it may be more difficult to hold parties accountable or to measure success.

These cases presented major problems in coordinating the efforts of very diverse organizations to attain these goals. All the parties had to have or develop some minimal capacities for working effectively with other agencies. In addition, in most cases some individuals and agencies took on *bridging roles* that were critical to coordinating information and action or to managing power differences.

The diversity of actors in many cases required individuals and organizations that understood the variety of perspectives to take on bridging roles to facilitate sharing information and coordination of joint action. This kind of bridging required that the individual or organization be seen as understanding the perspectives of different actors and be credible in transferring information and ideas. For example:

In Indonesia, LP3ES, a research and training NGO, provided information and training to farmers and water user associations as well as to government officials and policy-makers. LP3ES was seen as a credible research and training resource by both government agencies and farmers. As a consequence, it could work with both groups in ways that ultimately facilitated their working together.

In Bangladesh, the immunization program eventually involved 1300 different organizations. Some of the large NGOs like BRAC and CARE and the NGO network played key roles in coordinating activities. This coordination role required that they work effectively with both NGOs and with government agencies to carry out the program.

A second critical bridging role involved bridging the gap between unequally powerful groups. Carrying out this role is often complicated by histories of distrust, antagonism and conflict on all sides, and it is much more difficult to remain visibly neutral without losing credibility with some or all of the parties. For example:

In India the leaders of the Kamani Employees Union played a crucial role in bridging the enormous gaps between the unemployed workers, the officials at the Industrial Development Bank of India or the Bureau of Financial and Industrial Reconstruction, and the Justices of the Supreme Court. Without the exchanges of information permitted by their credibility, it is unlikely that the workers' initiative could have succeeded.

In Pakistan, the Orangi Pilot Project provided information and resources to lane organizations for the sanitation project, and they also helped to bridge the gaps between the lane organizations, government agencies, and international donors.

Bridging agencies can be caught in the middle. The Kamani Employees Union leaders were criticized by Indian trade unionists for getting too close to management, and LP3ES was questioned by other NGOs in Indonesia for becoming too close to the government. The bridging role requires maintaining credibility with many different actors and balancing loyalty to primary constituents with understanding of others' perspectives. As conflict intensifies, it may be an increasingly untenable role: The Kamani union leaders were probably more effective bridges to government agencies than to the Kamani family, and ZOTO probably had more credibility for linking the various people's organizations in Manila than with the National Housing Authority.

Finally, many of these cooperations included the presence of external third parties whose funds and moral support reduced the temptation of powerful parties to bias the cooperation in their favor. These actors were not at the center of the process, like the bridging organizations, but they did provide an external moderating influence that helped regulate potential conflict.

In Pakistan, for example, the BCCI Foundation provided support to Akhter Hameed Khan which allowed work with lane organizations to assess local needs and build trust. It also allowed for developing the technology by which slum residents could produce latrines at a fraction of the commercial cost. Later in the project, support from outside agencies like UNICEF helped resolve conflicts between OPP and government agencies.

In Malaysia the Youth Technology Centers offered independent sources of information and support for income generating programs. The presence of UN Volunteers at many of the Youth Technology Centers provided an external source of ideas, expertise, information, and support. Since they were typically from other countries and associated with the UN, they offered prestigious outside resources to grassroots groups that made projects internationally visible and locally independent.

Third parties from outside the country with new ideas and needed resources helped to level the playing field among the various parties. Their presence in some circumstances moderated the temptation for powerful parties to exploit their advantage. In addition, they also provided ideas and capacities that might not otherwise have been available as catalysts for cooperation.

Table 6 summarizes the organizational factors from the cases. It is worth noting that the complexity of the bridging roles was particularly high in the cases that involved power struggles between unequally powerful groups. Balancing power relations among unequal parties is

extremely challenging. It is also quite striking how many of the external third parties to these cooperations were international agencies, an issue to which we will return later.

Table 6: Organizing Joint Work

Case	Clear Ends and Means	Bridging Organizations	External Third Parties
Bangladesh Immunization Program	Immunize 85% of children by 1990	Coordination by big NGOs and Associations	UNICEF, World Health Organization
Indian Biogas Program	Build and maintain family biogas plants	Coordination, information by national (AFPRO) and state (Gram Vikas) NGOs	Canadian Hunger Foundation
Indian Workers Initiative	Rejuvenate plant and sustain recovered jobs	Coordination, power-balancing by PO (Kamani Employees Union)	Financial agencies, Supreme Court, media
Indonesian Irrigation Program	Maintain irrigation systems at lower cost	Coordination, information by NGO (LP3ES)	Ford Foundation, USAID
Malaysian Youth Technology Centers	Increase income for youth; Train new leaders	Coordination, information by NGO (Youth Center)	UN Volunteers
Pakistan Urban Sanitation Program	Build sewers and latrines in slum lanes	Coordination, information, power-balancing by NGO (Orangi Pilot Project)	Early BCCI Foundation, later UNICEF and others
Philippines Urban Upgrading	Urban upgrading with grassroots participation	Coordination of POs; power-balancing with GO and World Bank	World Bank

4f. Expanding Impacts and Levels of Aggregation

Some of these cooperations grew from small experiments to very large efforts involving thousands of people. This kind of growth posed at least two kinds of challenges: (1) destabilizing existing arrangements through rapid growth, and (2) creating demands for new kinds of organization to deal with higher levels of aggregation.

Sometimes *rapid growth* posed problems unforeseen by the original organization and assumptions of the cooperation. Those problems could actively threaten the continuation of the relationship.

A major concern in the Indian Biogas Program involved the rapid growth of Gram Vikas, the NGO that dominated the program there. While Gram Vikas demonstrably could make better, cheaper biogas plants than other NGOs or government agencies, its increasing power led to a struggle with the state oversight agency over resources, credit, and control. This struggle resulted in serious controversies at the national level and much political infighting and bickering among what had once been close partners.

In some cases program growth is seen to benefit all the parties, and there is little concern with differences in specific gains. In other cases, the distribution of power, credit or resources may be seen as unfair by some parties, and growth can lead to serious deterioration in the quality of cooperation. These patterns reinforce the importance of mechanisms for handling conflict and power struggles constructively.

The growth of the cooperation may also call for *larger organizational forms and strategies* to enable effective cooperation. While governments necessarily organize to work at a large scale, NGOs and people's organizations are more typically organized for work on local problems at a comparatively small scale. For them to work at the scale that government agencies take for granted can be quite difficult.

In the Philippines, in order to represent all the groups in the Tondo Foreshore area, the initial people's alliance had to be expanded into UGNAYAN, a coalition of groups from all the area neighborhoods. Later UGNAYAN built alliances with local government officials (barangay leaders) in order to carry out an area wide survey. In essence, these activities required organizational forms that enabled joint work by many organizations to carry out tasks too large for any of them to undertake alone.

In Bangladesh, the initial alliance of two large NGOs with government and donor agencies was expanded to include 1300 organizations to carry out the nationwide immunization program. This effort required huge new investments in coordination, particularly by the national NGO associations, in order to organize all the resources and activities effectively.

The creation of new coalitions and federations to work at a larger scale than is usual for grassroots organizations can be extremely challenging. Where the tasks are relatively well-defined, as in the immunization campaign, clear roles and responsibilities of participants in such federations can be worked out. It may be more difficult where federations of grassroots organizations engage in complex negotiations with parties that easily coordinate large scale communications or decision-making. When people's organizations and NGOs did not build organizations to match the level of aggregation of other parties, as in the Indonesian and Malaysian cases, there was relatively little grassroots influence on the program.

Table 7 summarizes the patterns of expanding impact and organization for aggregated influence. Four cases exhibited rapid growth beyond the initial levels of activity; others were potentially replicable at larger levels as well. In three countries organizational innovations to enable grassroots participation at national levels emerged, as did several other kinds of organizational innovation. Two of the three organizations for aggregating grassroots

organizations (In India and Bangladesh) emerged in response to rapid expansion of the programs.

Table 7: Expanding Impacts and Levels of Aggregation

Case		Rapid Growth		Organization for Aggregate Influence
Bangladesh Immunization Program	Yes:	Expand to a national movement for immunization.	Yes:	Create national alliance among GOs, NGOs, POs and many others to promote program.
Indian Biogas Program	Yes:	Expand Gram Vikas to largest biogas plant producer in Orissa.	Yes:	Create NGO network with AFPRO to expand program.
Indian Workers Initiative	No:	Focus on plant from start.	No:	(Propose new Centre for Workers' Management to aid other efforts)
Indonesian Irrigation Program	No:	Focus on national policy from start.	No:	(Create water user associations but not federations)
Malaysian Youth Technology Centers	Yes:	Expand initial centers to 32 with plans for 200 more.	No:	(Potential for national network of youth centers)
Pakistan Urban Sanitation Program	Yes:	Expand from one to hundreds of lane organizations in Karachi.	No:	(Potential for federations of lane organizations)
Philippines Urban Upgrading	No:	Continue focus within Tondo area.	Yes:	Create coalition to include all POs in area (UGNAYAN)

4g. Cooperation Outcomes

In these cases cooperation produced two kinds of outcomes (1) problem-solving outcomes with respect to the initial problem, and (2) changes in the social and institutional capacities of the parties, especially poor and powerless parties.

Problem-solving outcomes refer to results that respond to the initial problem. These results reflect the extent to which the multiple perspectives and resources wielded by the cooperation can promote effective solutions to otherwise intractable issues.

In Bangladesh, more than 1300 organizations collaborated in the extended immunization program to bring the level of immunization from 2% of the children in 1985

to 80% in 1990. One of the immediate consequences of this change was a 20% reduction in child mortality.

In Pakistan, the cooperation between the Orangi Pilot Project and the local lane organizations produced almost 65,000 new latrines and related sewage line and drains at 17% of the costs of commercial production. More than 90% of the costs of these improvements were born by the beneficiaries themselves.

Such results are important. Without such concrete cooperation outcomes, few organizations can be expected to invest the resources needed to make future problem solving effective, especially when old adversaries are involved.

In many cases, previously *"invisible" resources* were discovered by the cooperation. In the two cases described above, cooperation mobilized previously latent energy and creativity of grassroots populations. The lane organizations in Karachi essentially took over the sanitation project from the NGO that provided the initial technical assistance, and completed the project on their own, at low cost and largely without external resources. In Bangladesh the "movement" for immunization mobilized a wide variety of resources -- film stars, cricket heroes, and hundreds of grassroots organizations -- that were critical to reaching an extremely challenging goal. When cooperations with grassroots groups work, they can generate extraordinary energy and resources.

The cases suggest that *social and institutional changes* are equally important, if less obvious, consequences of some cooperations. Participation can fundamentally change institutional and attitudinal contexts that shape the behavior of many parties.

ZOTO's challenge to the World Bank and the National Housing Authority fundamentally altered many perspectives on the roles of people's organizations in the Philippines. ZOTO developed understanding of policy influence and its role, and the experience provided the seeds for increased urban organizing in the Philippines. The World Bank learned the utility of grassroots advice and later treated the experience as a model for future grassroots input. Even the government agencies involved learned alternative ways of working with grassroots groups.

The struggle of the Kamani Employees Union not only restored the jobs of its members, it also challenged them to take on more responsible roles in the new business. The fact that the company quickly surpassed performance forecasts reflects the empowerment of union members and managers alike. The impact on others has also been profound. Other union leaders, initially highly skeptical, are now consulting KEU leaders on new buyout initiatives. The government has encouraged the formation of a Centre for Workers' Management to provide technical support to similar initiatives in the future.

Sustainable improvements in the lives of poor people depend on the development of local institutional capacity for carrying on the activities of successful projects. So cooperations that do not enhance local capacities for constructive development action are likely to have limited long-term impacts. On the other hand, cooperations that provide the attitudinal and organizational bases for future action can have large multiplier effects. In the Pakistan

cooperation, for example, lane organization success in sanitation projects later led to new initiatives on behalf of their members. The policy changes in Indonesia were accompanied by substantial changes in government attitudes in favor of farmer participation in managing irrigation systems. The immunization program in Bangladesh changed attitudes of government and NGO workers toward each other and made future cooperation more likely.

Table 8 describes some of the problem-solving outcomes and the social and institutional consequences of the seven cases. Note that all the cases have some impact on the initial problems, as might be expected given our criteria for selection. Some also appear to mobilize previously unavailable resources from grassroots groups. It is these cases that are also characterized by social and institutional changes that empower people's organizations.

Table 8: Cooperation Outcomes

Case	Problem-Solving Outcomes	Social and Institutional Changes
Bangladesh Immunization Program	Immunization rates from 2% to 80%; child mortality down 20%; improved health services to grassroots communities.	Improved cooperation between GO and NGO workers in field; Large scale alliances among development organizations; Changed attitudes among NGOs, GOs, and POs.
Indian Biogas Program	45,000 new biogas plants in Orissa; reduction in deforestation from fuel wood use; increased availability of locally created fertilizer; reduced workload for women.	Experience and attitudes to support cooperation among GOs and NGOs at state and national levels; expanded capacity for NGO in Orissa.
Indian Workers Initiative	Kamani Tubes Limited returns to production; 600 workers reemployed; Plant exceeds performance expectations during the first year.	Union strengthened as resources to its members; GOs see innovative plant ownership and management demonstrated; rise of Center for Workers Management; new initiatives to take over sick plants.
Indonesian Irrigation Program	Reduce maintenance costs 50-60% for small irrigation systems; involve farmers in carrying out system management and construction; potential savings in hundreds of millions of U.S.\$.	New policy instituted to transfer control of small irrigation systems to farmers; 166 water user associations accredited; GO workers change attitudes in favor of farmer participation.

Malaysian Youth Technology Centers	32 new Centers started after initial successes; 200 more planned; small agribusinesses started with Center support providing resources to Centers and to youth club members.	Center establishment rewards active youth clubs; improvements in relations between youth clubs and district and Ministry officials; development of youth leadership.
Pakistan Urban Sanitation Program	64,000 latrines and related sewage systems constructed in Karachi slums; more than 90% of resources provided by slum dwellers; costs of construction less than 1/6 of commercial costs.	More than 4,000 lane organizations participate in sewage system construction; lane organizations undertake other projects; NGO recognized as a research and training center; cooperation with GOs and DOs in other areas to build sewage systems.
Philippines Urban Upgrading	Titles cleared for homeowners; self-help to improve housing in 90% of houses in 137 Ha in Tondo Foreshore area; improved facilities and infrastructure.	Improved relations among POs, barangays, and GOs; wider networks of POs established; training for grassroots leaders and organizers.

5. DISCUSSION

Some general concepts emerge from these cases that may be helpful for examining other situations in which such multiparty cooperation is contemplated. We will briefly discuss here three sets of concepts: (a) the actors involved in the cooperation, (b) the phases of cooperation, and (c) different forms of cooperation found in these cases.

5a. Actors

The array of actors that participate or have a stake in these cooperations is impressive, and often bewildering. We have found it helpful to develop terms that describe different kinds of association with the cases, both to describe different roles that have emerged and to clarify the consequences of shifts in role when parties enter a new relationship.

We use the term *stakeholder* to identify individuals or organizations that have an interest in the problem and the cooperation. A stakeholder might have an interest in the outcomes of the cooperation, but be entirely passive or even ignorant of the existence of problem-solving activity. The unorganized poor populations of Bangladesh had a stake in the success of the immunization program, even if they didn't know it existed.

A *party* to the cooperation is actively engaged as a participant. Parties often represent larger *constituencies* that are not immediately present in the cooperation. ZOTO, the National Housing Authority, and the World Bank were all parties to the urban upgrading project for the Tondo Foreshore area of Manila, each representing quite different constituencies.

An *ally* supports one or more parties to the cooperation without being directly involved in it, as the church-based NGOs in the Philippines supported ZOTO. An *opponent* challenges the activities of one or more parties to the cooperation, as the Indian trade unions criticized the Kamani Employee Union for taking on management responsibilities.

In some situations, external actors became *third parties* who are not allied with other parties. The Ford Foundation in Indonesia, for example, provided useful inputs and ideas to the cooperation without becoming an obvious party. In many cases, *bridging organizations* emerged as key actors in launching or preserving the cooperation. The Orangi Pilot Project in Pakistan and LP3ES in Indonesia, for example, both played key roles in linking various parties who had difficulty dealing with each other directly.

Figure 1 locates these roles with respect to the cooperation delineated by the dotted line around the parties. It is worth noting that there are often intense conflicts and power struggles around defining who is in and who is out of the cooperation. The long struggle to exclude the Kamani family from control over the plant in India and the struggle of ZOTO to be included in the decision-making process on the Tondo Foreshore in the Philippines are examples. So drawing the dotted line around the parties to the cooperation in Figure 1 can be a conflictful process.

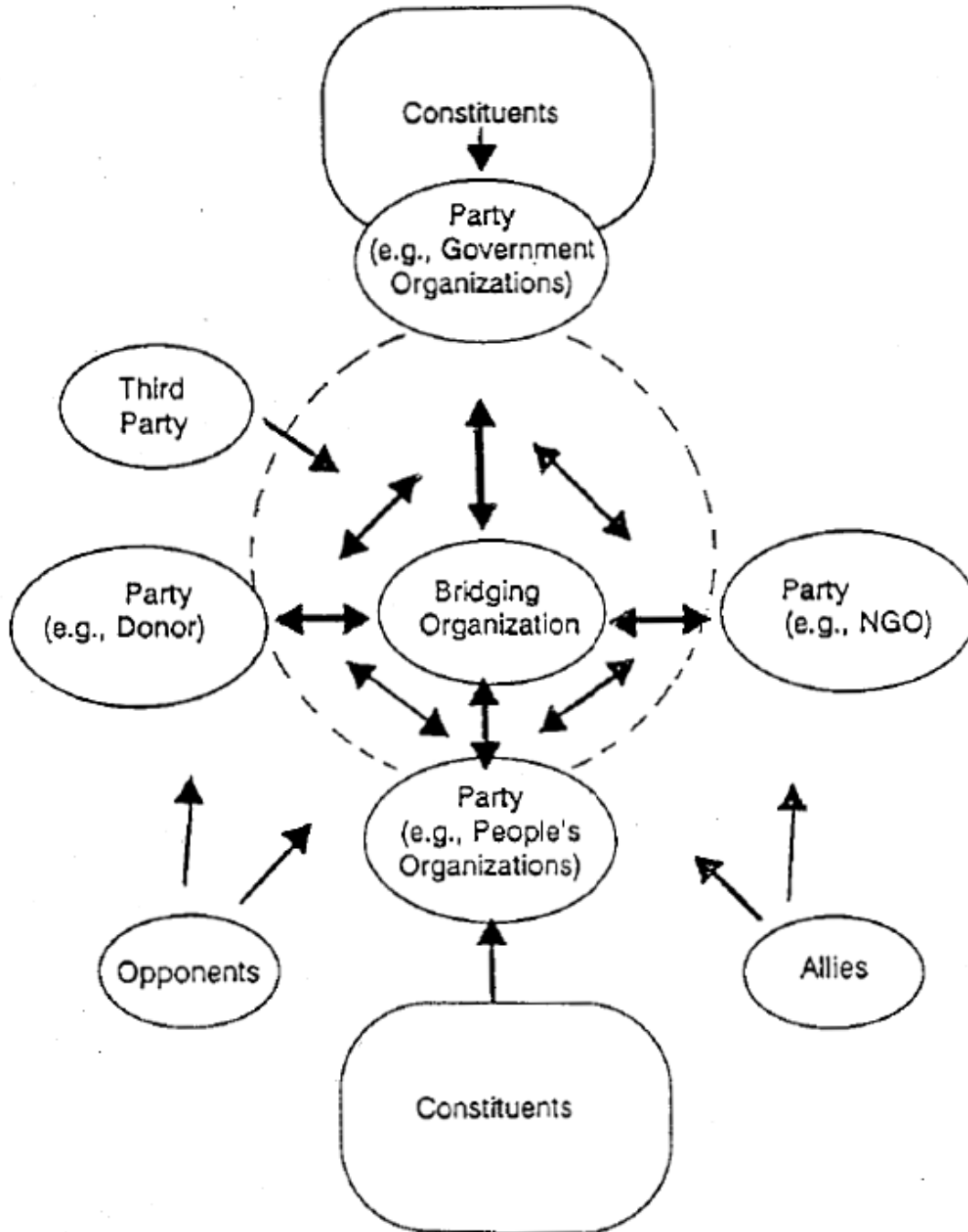
5b. Phases of cooperation

The seven cases varied greatly in the length of time they persisted and in their initial diagnosis. Nonetheless we can identify several phases that reappear in their development.

These cooperations were not the first attempt to solve the problems on which they focused. They often involved an extended *problem-framing phase* as a prerequisite to cooperation. Often extensive but ineffective problem solving activity preceded the reframing that identified cooperation as a desirable strategy. Stakeholders willing to be parties to cooperation must be identified, and contacts initiated to bring them together especially when they are dubious about the possibility of cooperation. Informal contacts and interpersonal relations were often critical to getting the right parties involved. In this initial period pitched battles may be fought over who is to be included, such as the multi-year struggle to get the Kamani family out of control of the plant. The problem-framing phase culminates with negotiating a shared definition of the problem, who is going to participate in the problem-solving process, and what the initial steps in problem-solving will be.

The *implementation phase* builds on the agreements from the problem-framing phase to articulate and implement specific actions. Preliminary agreements, such as shared procedures for handling conflicts or balancing power differences or distributing responsibilities, may have to be renegotiated during this phase. This is also the period in which the differences among the parties can present difficult-to-bridge variations in perspectives. In the Bangladesh immunization program, for example, government, officials and NGO staff had to learn to work together in spite of their negative stereotypes about each other. This phase requires that the parties identify and carry out specific tasks needed to accomplish solutions to the problems, and agreement on general values and goals may be severely tested by the demands of implementation.

Figure 1: Actors in Multiparty Collaborations



As cooperations implement initial activities, they create the potentials for the *expansion or consolidation phase*. Resolutions of the initial problems encourage decisions to expand or consolidate the relevant activities. Thus in Pakistan, the success of the Orangi Pilot Project catalyzed much interest in expanding the sanitation program and subsequent struggles for control of the expanded program. The initial success in providing family biogas plants in India encouraged the parties to expand their cooperative activities. Such expansions may call for major changes in the roles of parties, redistributions of power and credit, and other changes that threaten the viability of the cooperation. Thus the shift in power between Gram Vikas and the Orissa state agency in the biogas program led to power struggles that threaten the continuing viability of the program. In other cases, consolidation of the gains achieved or the solutions developed is more appropriate. In Bangladesh the immunization program had covered most of the country, and the issue after 1990 was to consolidate the new programs to serve future generations of children and pick up those not yet immunized.

While conflicts over differing interests, styles, perspectives, and power can be found in all phases, there are differences in emphasis in different phases. In the problem framing phase, for example, conflicts are often grounded in suspicions and misperceptions from past history and ideological differences. In the implementation phase, conflicts often focus on specific activities of different parties. In the consolidation and expansion phase, conflicts are more often grounded in direct experience with each other, in the distribution of credit for program activities, and in implications of further cooperation.

5c. Forms of cooperation

The notions of "cooperation" and "partnership" have recently been widely discussed in the development literature.²⁴ These cases suggest that the concept of cooperation needs to be refined in the light of experience. We can identify three forms of cooperation that might bear further analysis: (1) instrumental cooperation, (2) participatory cooperation, and (3) development partnerships.

Instrumental cooperation involves parties that have a clear self-interest in working together. That interest may be commitment to shared goals, or it may be reflected in diverse interests that can all be served by joint action. In the Indonesian case, for example, the government's interest in reducing maintenance costs of irrigation systems dovetailed with the commitment of LP3ES and university social scientists to promoting water user participation in control of irrigation systems. Such instrumental cooperations can often be launched by creative analysis of the interests of each party, and the crafting of mutual incentives for joint work. But such cooperations do not last if the incentives change so that joint action is no longer in the interests of one or several parties.

Several of these cases also illustrate *participatory cooperation*, in which the resources of grassroots groups are explicitly recognized and involved in solving joint problems. In participatory cooperation, enabled people's organizations join with other parties to define problems, plan solutions, and implement changes that affect their lives. In many of the cases that mobilized previously invisible resources, like the Philippines urban upgrading project and the Pakistan sanitation project, people's organizations played an influential role in defining, planning and implementing the project. Participatory cooperation requires the empowerment

of grassroots groups, but that participation is not automatic even when it may be in the interest of all the parties. Low power groups are frequently very careful about relations with powerful parties, and it often requires a deliberate effort by the latter to make cooperation possible. Even good faith efforts to make cooperation possible by powerful parties can be frustrated if the low-power groups are not organized to work at the same level of aggregation.

Finally, a third form of cooperation is occasionally visible in these cases. In what we call development partnerships, the parties share a larger vision of a better society and an interorganizational solidarity that leads them to continue collaborating in the absence of instrumental incentives or even, in some cases, in the face of apparent disincentives. Examples include the relations between the Orangi Pilot Project and lane organizations in Karachi, the alliance between workers and managers in Kamani Tubes Limited, and the informal linkages between ZOTO and sympathizers in the World Bank and the National Housing Authority in the Philippines. In these cases, shared visions and commitments among the partners enabled them to work together in the teeth of substantial risks and disincentives that would have quickly undermined a relationship formed on the basis of clear instrumental gains to the parties.

Not surprisingly, development partnerships are the most demanding and most uncommon form of cooperation across sectoral and class boundaries. Such partnerships may grow out of the other forms of cooperation, and they are particularly powerful when they occur. On the other hand, they set a high standard. Parties sometimes expect such commitments where other kinds of cooperation are more realistic, and then reject others for being instrumental even when cooperation based on initial instrumental gains might evolve into long-term partnerships if the parties were willing to explore joint action.

6. SOME POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The methodologies employed by this study do not permit unambiguous findings or firm conclusions about the utility of cooperation in general terms. The implications described in this section have to be treated as hypotheses rather than definitive conclusions. Nonetheless, it is useful to summarize the patterns that persist across cases for further investigation, and to do so in terms relevant to policy-makers concerned with solving development problems.

6a. Cooperation can be an effective strategy for difficult problems.

It is not surprising that these cases are successes, since success was a criterion for selection. But it also true that various actors had been trying to solve these problems for years, with little success. In these cases the necessary ingredients for sustainable solutions were spread across a variety of actors, and cooperation among them was critical to bring those ingredients together.

Cooperation is not always appropriate. The evidence suggests that cooperation is quite difficult, given the diversity of perspectives, interests and capacities that different actors bring. But for complex problems where some mutual gains from joint action can be identified, cooperation may be an effective strategy for dealing with otherwise intractable problems.

6b. Cooperation can grow out of crisis.

Cooperation across sectoral differences and power inequalities demands considerable commitment from the parties. In these cases, for example, government participation often grew out of the perception that old solutions were not working and that new solutions were imperative given the larger context. In Indonesia, for example, lack of resources to maintain existing irrigation systems compelled new relations with water user associations. In India, the enormous growth in "sick industries" set the stage for government interest in worker rejuvenation of a failed plant.

The existence of a serious problem that is not responding to more orthodox solutions may indicate an opportunity for cooperative strategies. Cooperation offers the opportunity for mobilizing a variety of resources from many different actors, and so it can increase the fund of information and ideas as well as reservoirs of resources that can be tapped for problem solving.

6c. Cooperation can be ignited by outside events or agents.

The cases indicated that individuals or ideas were often catalysts for starting a cooperation. Individuals with wide contacts and credibility, like the leader of the Kamani Employees Union, were often central to bringing together parties that would not otherwise have considered working together. Compelling ideas also serve as rallying points for bringing together new coalitions, such as the notions gained through the Indonesian visit to the Philippine experiment with irrigation management.

Eventually the cooperation must be organized around shared goals and agreements about the contributions of different parties. But bringing the parties together in the first place may depend a great deal on catalytic individuals, ideas and events that help parties reframe their understanding of the problem and the possibilities.

6d. Cooperation entails conflict and power struggles.

These cases all involved bringing together parties with diverse interests, information, resources, and power. Since cooperation involves mutual influence, these differences hold out an ever-present possibility of conflict over ends and means and struggles over resources and power. Struggles over control of decisions in the Philippines urban upgrading and the Indian worker projects, and conflicts over the distribution of resources and credit in the Indian biogas program were central to the evolution of those cooperations.

The need for mutual influence in cooperation implies important changes for many of the parties. Government agencies and international donors, for example, must surrender some control over funds and authority if they are to share influence with NGOs and people's organizations. People's organizations and NGOs must develop attitudes and capacities for challenging as well as working with governments and donors if they are to collaborate effectively with them. Managing conflict and balancing power inequalities constructively are prerequisites to effective cooperation.

6e. Cooperation requires bridging organizations and relationships.

The success of these cooperations depended on capacity for creating and establishing productive relations across institutional boundaries. At the onset in most cases, initial contacts were established through informal linkages among key actors. While these connections were often facilitated by catalytic individuals who were able to work with diverse parties, some commitment and capacity for bridging was required for all individuals.

In many cases, organizations that undertook bridging roles played critical roles, particularly in the implementation and institutionalization phases. For long term or widely expanded cooperations, catalytic individuals needed to be replaced by more permanent institutional arrangements. Often such organizations faced extreme pressures to abandon their bridging role. Wider understanding of the importance of maintaining contacts with many actors might increase the capacity of bridging organizations for playing an effective role in promoting and preserving cooperation.

6f. Cooperation can mobilize previously unavailable resources.

In most of these cases, the cooperations generated energy and resources from grassroots groups that might otherwise have remained passive recipients of government services. Those energies allowed joint efforts to achieve extraordinary goals, like the dramatic expansion of immunization in Bangladesh or the reduction in irrigation system maintenance costs in Indonesia. Even in cases where government agencies were not involved at the start, such as the Pakistan sanitation project and the Indian workers initiative, national development policy-makers got "something for nothing" through the mobilization of grassroots resources. Cooperation with grassroots groups can mobilize popular energy and creativity for development objectives that enables policy makers to accomplish more than is possible with government resources alone.

6g. Cooperation can build new institutional attitudes and capacities, especially among people's organizations.

These cooperations frequently reoriented the perceptions and the capacities of the parties. The competition between government workers and NGO workers in Bangladesh, for example, was transformed during the immunization campaign into mutual assistance. The struggle between ZOTO, the World Bank and the government of the Philippines over the Tondo Foreshore development is understood in retrospect at the World Bank as one early example of receiving good advice from grassroots groups.²⁵ The experience of cooperation can promote learning among many parties.

In particular, some of these cases suggest that cooperation can strengthen people's organizations to take initiatives and to influence national policy-makers. This outcome is not always regarded favorably by policy-makers: The Marcos regime in the Philippines, for example, would have preferred less uproar from ZOTO. But grassroots groups that invest local resources in one development activity may also be more active participants in future efforts, as were ZOTO members in the Philippines and the Karachi lane organizations in

Pakistan. The price of mobilizing grassroots resources for cooperative development action may be higher expectations for participation in political decision-making. Policy-makers that engage in cooperative ventures with grassroots organizations can mobilize previously hidden resources, but those organizations may also call for attention to their interests in the future.

7. IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY-MAKERS AND DONORS

What lessons can be derived from these experiences for actors in future development cooperations? What are the implications for policy makers who want to promote future cooperative problem-solving? The following suggestions focus on governments and international development agencies, since they are the types of policy-makers most involved in these cases. Rajesh Tandon has written about the implications of these cases for NGOs and people's organizations in "Holding Together: Collaborations and Partnerships in the Real World."²⁶ In other settings catalytic roles have also been played by other institutions, such as corporation or universities.

7a. National Policy Makers

Why should national policy makers bother with cooperative problem solving? Work with other institutions is inevitably difficult and frustrating, so when should policy-makers consider cooperation? These cases suggest that cooperation can help solve otherwise intractable problems that plague policy-makers. In addition, cooperation may generate previously untapped resources and build the institutional capacities that will sustain improvements after initial interventions are completed. Such benefits may be substantial incentives for tolerating the frustrations of cooperation.

But these frustrations can also be substantial. Cooperation may require the investment of scarce economic and political resources; it may create conflicts and challenges from NGOs and people's organizations; it may demand substantial reorientation of government officials who prefer the authority of bureaucracy to the negotiations of partnership. It is not accidental that substantial government participation was most common when senior government officials perceived crises in the problems areas addressed.

Given these potential costs and gains, the following suggestions are intended as heuristic guides:

- 1. Seek cooperations for serious problems when other strategies don't work.** Positive government participation seems most common where policy-makers saw a crisis or an intractable problem for which other solutions were not working. Cooperation does not work for everything, but it helps if key actors have a big stake in seeing it succeed.
- 2. Use informal contacts to identify partners and build trust.** Since the formal system seldom creates the relationships across the diverse actors needed for such cooperations, informal contacts are critical to identifying and building the needed links. Trust from informal contact is especially vital when there are histories of conflict among the parties.

3. **Encourage grassroots innovations for local answers.** Policies that support and reward the use of local creativity and energy to solve problems can pay large dividends in local resources as well as new ideas. Such policies require surrendering some control and bureaucratic neatness, and they often inspire resistance from lower level officials who fear loss of power.
4. **Support the independence of bridging organizations.** Organizations that span the gap between government policy-makers and grassroots groups are subject to control pressures from both. More control by governments often translates to less credibility and effectiveness with grassroots groups. But less control is often associated with less respect and obedience to policy-makers. Promoting relative independence and accepting two-way accountability for bridging organizations can create large dividends in information flow and mutual influence.
5. **Use external supports for experimental initiatives.** External agencies can provide and support new ideas and give legitimacy to local experiments. This may require less direct control over scarce resources, however, so policy-makers may have to sacrifice present resources for uncertain innovations.

The benefits of cooperation are increased resources and energy and ideas for development policy-making and implementation. The price is often less control and credit for presently powerful actors. This is not an easy choice for many government policy-makers, except when crises demand immediate action and creation of new solutions beyond existing capacities.

7b. International Donors and Development Agencies

What are the incentives for international donors and development agencies to promote cooperative problem-solving? Cooperation can multiply impacts of limited investments; promote institutional bases for sustainability; and avoid resistance at multiple levels to imposed policies. The more development strategies are grounded in a cooperative process, the more likely it is that there will be local commitment to continuing the program.²⁷

But again there are costs of encouraging such processes. Cooperation can slow decision-making or reduce the influence of experts. Cooperation also inevitably involves political differences, which can be especially ticklish when some collaborators are critics of governments to which foreign agencies must relate. Cooperation may also subject the agency to struggles with diverse constituencies that can create considerable stress and difficulty. Cooperative processes may also demand a range of new skills from project staff.

Assuming that the benefits of cooperation will sometimes outweigh its disadvantages, these cases suggest several heuristic principles relevant to donors and development agencies:

1. **Assess problems in terms of the minimum coalitions needed for solution.** The assumption that the government is the primary engine of development can blind analysts to the potential contributions of other players. In many of these cases, governments were *not*

the major player, and outside resources were often key to getting problem-solving started by other key agencies.

- 2. Support pilot projects to build needed coalitions and relationships.** Seed projects can bring together diverse actors to identify shared interests and perspectives, create informal contacts, and support experiments with integrative organizational forms and processes that can later be expanded to larger cooperations.
- 3. Support the legitimacy of bridging organizations.** Particularly in politically polarized situations, the credibility of organizations that span the chasms between potential partners is easily damaged. Support from credible external agencies can confer badly-needed legitimacy for bridging roles. Financial support from neutral outsiders can allow action when taking funds from other parties would damage the bridging organization's credibility.
- 4. Reinforce government willingness to collaborate.** External agencies can give innovative projects credibility and keep governments from overreacting to the stresses of cooperation. Information about successes elsewhere can stimulate innovation, and outside support can be essential for weathering the political problems of cooperation.

External donors are often in positions to act as catalysts of innovative problem-solving through carefully targeted support of pilot projects, through ideas from other settings introduced at the right time, and through validation of the legitimacy for key institutions and actors at times of stress. International donors and development agencies are often much more than catalysts; too often their effect -- intentionally or not -- is to promote or reinforce ineffective or actively noxious programs.²⁸ It may require fundamental changes in the approaches of such international agencies if they are to become catalysts of cooperation among the many stakeholders needed to solve some of these problems.

8. CONCLUSION

This study compares seven examples of multiparty cooperation to solve a wide range of difficult development problems. In some circumstances, such cooperations are extraordinarily effective, both for solving specific problems and for building social and institutional capacity required for future development initiatives. Cooperation is *not* a panacea, and these cases suggest it does not automatically continue even when it is initially successful. In some circumstances, however, carefully constructed alliances among grassroots groups, NGOs, government agencies, donor organizations and other parties may make remarkable contributions to solving intractable problems of social, economic, and institutional development.

ENDNOTES

1. We have chosen to use "cooperation" and "cooperative problem-solving" after considerable struggle with alternative terminology. We initially used "collaboration" and "collaborative problem-solving." These terms are in common use in some countries, but have very negative connotations in others. We have considered alternatives like "partnership," "alliance," and "coalition." In the end we have chosen "cooperation" as a relatively neutral alternative, even though it also suffers from several drawbacks.
2. "People's organizations" are composed of grassroots members and act on behalf of those members. Examples include cooperatives, neighborhood organizations, unions, and other forms of organization that seek to further the well-being of their members. The term "non-governmental development organizations (NGOs)" covers a wide range of agencies that are independent of the government and committed to promoting development for disadvantaged groups. NGOs often serve populations that are not members of the organization. For more information on people's organizations and NGOs, see John Clark, *Democratizing Development: The Role of Voluntary Organizations*, West Hartford, CT: Kumarian, 1990; or L.D. Brown and D.C. Korten, Working More effectively with Non-governmental Organizations, in S. Paul and A. Israel, *Nongovernmental Organizations and the World Bank: Cooperation for Development*, Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 1991, 44-93.
3. Ackoff has labelled such constellations of interacting problems "messes" and argued that they call for quite different forms of problem-solving. See Russell Ackoff, *Redesigning the Future*. Wiley, 1974, p. 21. Others have also recognized the intractable characteristics of such self-reinforcing problems, such as B.G. Gray, *Collaborating: Finding Common Ground for Multiparty Problems*, San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1989, and E. Trist, Referent Organizations and the Development of Interorganizational Domains, *Human Relations*, 1983, 36:3, 247-268.
4. See Barbara Gray, *Collaborating : Finding Common Ground for Multiparty Problems*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989, p. 10.
5. See D.C. Korten, *Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda*, West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, 1990; L.R. Brown et al., *State of the World, 1991*, New York: Norton, 1991.
6. The impact of market failures in developing countries is examined in J. Jorgenson, T. Hafsi, and M. Kiggundu, Towards a Market Imperfections Theory of Organizational Structure in Developing Countries, *Journal of Management Studies*, 23:4, 1986, 417-442.
7. See M. Boisot and J. Child, The Iron Law of Fiefs: Bureaucratic Failure and the Problem of Governance in the Chinese System Reforms, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 33, 1988, 507-527 for an intriguing exploration of the problems of bureaucratic and organization failures in developing country settings.
8. See Gray, *op. cit.*, Trist, *op. cit.* Collaboration does not imply pure cooperation or no conflicts of interest. It does suggest that those differences are resolved by patterns of

interaction quite different from pure competition over price or obedience to legitimate authority.

9. In this connection Robert Axelrod's seminal study of *The Evolution of Cooperation*, New York: Basic Books, 1984, suggests that collaboration is a fundamental strategy that is visible at the level of bacteria as well as in relations among sentient individuals.

10. See M.J. Piore and C.F. Sable, *The Second Industrial Divide: Possibilities for Prosperity*, New York: Basic Books, 1984; or P. Lawrence and R. Johnston, Beyond Vertical Integration: The Rise of the Value-Adding Partnership, *Harvard Business Review*, 1988, July-August, 94-101.

11. See Gray, *op. cit.*

12. See Bhishwapriya Sanyal, Antagonistic Cooperation: A Case Study of Nongovernmental Organizations, Government and Donors' Relationships in Income-Generating Projects in Bangladesh, *World Development*, 19:10, 1991, 1367-1579.

13. See M. Bratton, Non-government Organizations in Africa: Can They Influence Public Policy? *Development and Change*, 21, 1989, 81-118. See also L.D. Brown, Bridging Organizations and Sustainable Development, *Human Relations*, 44, August, 1991, 807-831.

14. Evaluation studies by the World Bank suggest that local institution-building is a critical factor that distinguishes between projects that are sustainable for long periods after completion and those that soon decline to perform below expectations. See M. Cernea, Farmer Organizations and Institution Building for Sustainable Development, *Regional Development Dialogue*, 8:2, 1987, 1-24.

15. For discussions of case analysis as a method for studying complex systems and policy questions, see R.K. Yin and K.A. Heald, Using the Case Survey Method to Analyze Policy Studies, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 29, 1975, 371-381; and R.K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1984.

16. This and future references to the India Employees Initiative case are based on Prem Chadha, *Employees' Initiative in Combatting Industrial Sickness: The Case of Kamani Tubes - India*, New Delhi, Centre for Workers Management, 1991.

17. References to the Bangladesh Immunization case are based on material contained in Azfar Hussain, *Collaborative Efforts in Rural Immunization: The Bangladesh Case*, Association of Development Agencies of Bangladesh. Dhaka, Bangladesh. 1991.

18. For descriptions of the Indonesian Irrigation Program, see Agus Purnomo and Agus Pambagio, *Fostering Local Management of Small Irrigation Systems*. Jakarta, Indonesia, 1991.

19. For material on the Philippines Urban Upgrading case, see Maria Anna de Rosas-Ignacio, *Collaborative Effort in Development: The Case of the Tondo Foreshoreland/Dagat-Dagatan*

Development Project. Manila, Philippines, 1991.

20. Descriptions of the Pakistan Urban Sanitation Program are based on Anwar Rashid, Self-Financed, Self-Managed Low-Cost Sanitation Development in Orangi, Orangi Pilot Project Research and Training Institute. Karachi Pakistan., 1991.

21. For material on the Malaysian Youth Centers Program, see Dato' Haji Mohd. Soffian Abd. Rahim, Village Technology Centres for Development of Grassroots Communities Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia., 1991.

22. The descriptions of the Indian Biogas Program are based on Rekha Bezboruah and Jayanti Banerjee, Multi Agency Collaboration for Promoting a Low-Cost and Sustainable Rural Energy Source: The Biogas Case. Ekatra, New Delhi, India, 1991.

23. There is a good deal of evidence that large power differences make it difficult for the unequal parties to negotiate effectively or to handle conflict constructively. See, for examples, L.D. Brown, Interface Analysis and the Management of Unequal Conflict, in G.B.J. Bomers and R. Peterson, Industrial Relations and Conflict Management, Boston: Kluwer-Nijhoff, 1983, pp. 60-78, or J. Paige, Agrarian Revolution, New York: Free Press, 1975.

24. There has been considerable concern with the possibility of collaboration, for example, among NGOs and other stakeholders. See, for examples, A.G. Drabek, Development Alternatives: The Challenges for NGOs -- An Overview of the Issues, World Development, Special Issue, Supplement to Volume 15, 1987, ix-xv; or T. Brodhead et al, Bridges of Hope, Ottawa, Canada: The North-South Institute, 1988. In some circumstances collaboration may continue in the teeth of negative perceptions about the activity among stakeholders, as described by B. Sanyal, Antagonistic Cooperation: A Case Study of Nongovernmental Organizations, Government and Donors' Relationships in Income-Generating Projects in Bangladesh, World Development, 19:10, 1991, 1367-1379.

25. See, for example, L.F. Salmon and A.P. Eaves, Between Public and Private: A Review of Non-Governmental Organization Involvement in World Bank Projects, Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1989.

26. The present paper is one of two written about these case studies. This paper was written for an audience of governments and international development policy makers. The companion piece was written for an audience of NGO and people's organization leaders. See Rajesh Tandon, Holding Together: Collaboration and partnership in the Real World, New Delhi: Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), 1991.

27. See R. Heaver and A. Israel, Country Commitment to Development Projects, Washington, DC: World Bank Discussion Paper No. 4, 1986.

28. For example, there is evidence that World Bank projects that failed to encourage the development of local institutions capable of sustaining projects after their completion was likely

to undermine their long-term sustainability. See Cernea, *op. cit.*, 1987. More generally, resources granted to governments whose institutions mirror the colonial systems for expropriating resources are unlikely to lead to grassroots development. See L.D. Brown and D.C. Korten, Working with More Effectively with Nongovernmental Organizations, in S. Paul and A. Israel (eds), *Nongovernmental Organizations and the World Bank*, Washington: The World Bank, 1991, 45-93.

