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Exploring New Sources of Partnerships for Small States

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Introduction

There was a proverb that was often heard in the halls at international meetings during the 1990s:

> 'Give a man a fish and he has food for the day
> Teach him how to fish and he has food for life!'[1]

The narrative here was clear. We can gain further insight if we re-examine the conceptual framework of fish for food, fishing for sustainability and further analyse it through reference to a little of the historical evidence. For example, in the eighteenth dynasty in ancient Thebes, about 1400 BC, we find (see Figure 1) that spear fishing then was well established and celebrated. Indeed, it is an ancient hunting method that has been used throughout the world for millennia. Early civilisations were familiar with the custom of spearing fish from rivers, streams and the sea using sharpened sticks. Spear fishing with barbed poles was widespread in Palaeolithic times. The Cosquer Cave at Cap Morgion in Southern France contains cave art over 16,000 years old, including drawings of seals which appear to have been harpooned.[2] There are references to fishing with spears in ancient literature although, in most cases, the descriptions do not go into detail. An early example is from the Bible in Job 41.7:

> 'Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? or his head with fish spears?'

In his *Histories* the Greek historian Polybius, referring to the period about 203–120 BC, describes hunting for swordfish by using a harpoon with a barbed and detachable head.[3] Thus, spear fishing is an ancient method that has been used throughout the world for thousands of years. Some of the civilisations in which it originated may have died out, and in others the practice has been overtaken by new fisheries technology, but have spear-fishing skills been entirely lost?

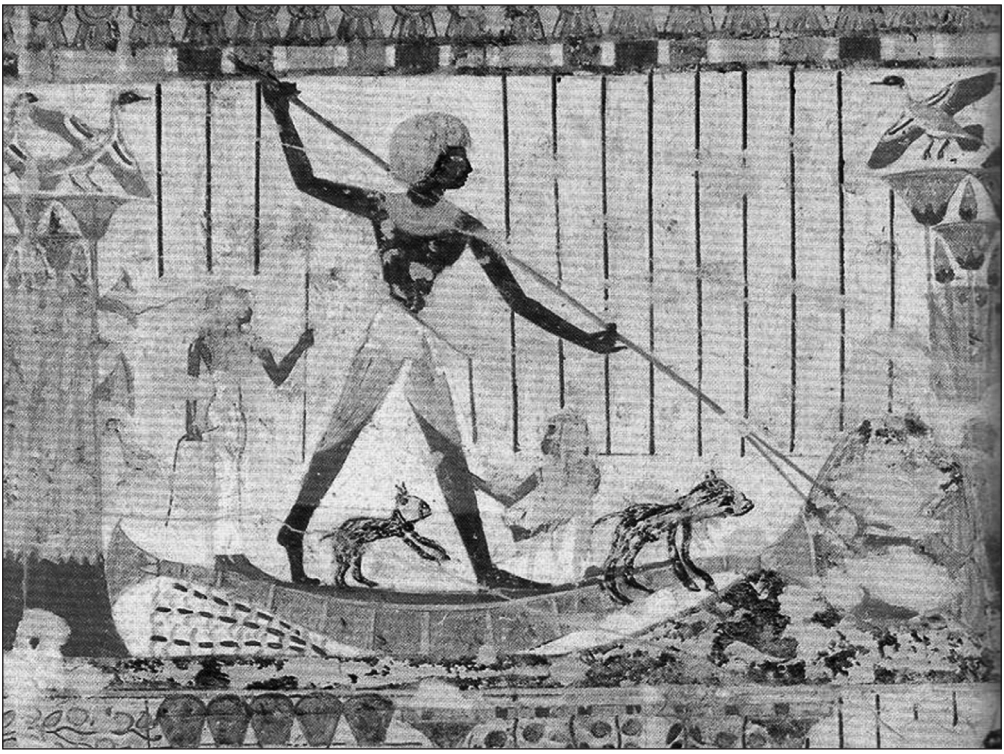

Figure 2.1 Spear fishing in eighteenth dynasty Thebes 1400 BC
Source: Sahrhage, D (1998) *Fischfang und Fischkult im Alten Ägypten,* von Zabern, Mainz (Kulturgeschichte der Antiken Welt, Bd. 70 (Unknown photographer: copyright expired)

A few years ago, I was leading a field mission for the Government of Mauritius to one of its outer islands, Agalega, some 1,000 km north of Mauritius main island. There, after a day spent reviewing the health and education services and environmental protection facilities, I wandered in the evening onto the beach to collect shells washed up by the Indian Ocean swell. As the sun was fading fast, two young men came from the village with spears, stepped into the water and within minutes had speared two pan-sized fish, no doubt for supper.

Within the context of a plentiful supply of fish, the young men of Agalega do not need to be taught to fish by UN experts; their parents have already taught them – as had the parents of the fishermen of ancient Thebes 3,400 years ago – and well before that in prehistoric Mediterranean France 16 millennia ago.

Back on Mauritius main island – and, I suspect, in many developing countries – the skills of artisanal fishing are fading, with both the extinction of the ancient practices of these peoples and the loss of fish in the lagoons. Development presents the paradox that, while indigenous cultures have demonstrated the practice of sustainable development, at the same time they have become vulnerable from external and local factors. Now they have had to learn to adapt themselves and meld their knowledge and skills with those that are now more relevant and adaptable from beyond.

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the need for small island developing states to form new partnerships with the international community to achieve sustainable development, since national practices alone would leave these countries unable to cope with the challenges they face. The chapter explores the different avenues through which the international community can assist small states through various partnership arrangements.

Old challenges, new partnerships

Fresh choices have to be made to meet the challenges of development. The Mauritius Strategy (MS) acknowledges that unsustainable exploitation of the non-renewable natural resources of developing countries has prompted the need for action for mitigation and adaptation. The SIDS cannot make this leap alone. Their concerns include the adverse impacts of coastal development, coastal tourism, intensive and destructive fishing practices and pollution, as well as the unreported and illegal trade in corals and its impact on the future health of coral reefs. To overcome these issues, the MS recommended the further development of partnerships to provide technical and financial support: for monitoring, research and development, for strengthening representative networks of marine protected areas, and for attention to the impact of coral bleaching, including enhancing resistance and recovery.

These tasks require skills and resources often beyond those available at local level in SIDS. The MS recommended working with relevant regional and international development partners on initiatives to promote the sustainable conservation and management of coastal and marine resources, drawing upon best practice from other regions, including the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy. It recommended the designation of the Caribbean Sea as a special area in the context of sustainable development. It commended the ocean governance project involving all regions, and the establishment of related initiatives in other small island developing states regions. Such programmes of mitigation and adaptation are being pursued with the establishment of specialist international support such as through the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, and particularly with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme, recognising the fragile ecologies and economic, environmental and social vulnerability of SIDS.

We may use this story of the fishers as a metaphor for partnerships for the future. These partnerships cannot build simply on indigenous knowledge and skills; instead they must recognise that the opportunity to offer solutions for local people must be seized so those skills can continue. Island people do not need to be taught how to fish but do need help to develop the skills and equipment to fish in new ways. New paradigms of partnership in these initiatives are being tried and tested. New forms of partnerships are evolving in the Pacific Islands, the Caribbean, as they are in the African villages where Jeffrey Sachs and his team are conducting the Millennium Villages Project with local people.[4]

But to extend and enrich sustainable development we shall need other new forms of partnership with local people, together with a revived conceptual framework to underpin and shape the development. This requires both learning about the value and the shortcomings

of practices of indigenous culture and the added value of development of fresh approaches to education and training of managers and leaders.[5] This is emerging through studying the knowledge and skills of local people, hearing their views and offering relevant support based on evidence of what can work well.

Those island fishermen and their families who have migrated from the seashores did not do so because they do not know how to fish. Many of the Pacific SIDS people have moved for economic opportunity, education for their children and the ability to have and make choices. Population pressure has also been a factor in migration in places like Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Tuvalu and in Mauritius, one of the most densely populated countries in the world. Sustainable fishing in small islands has been adversely affected both by illegal intrusion of alien fishing fleets and by local population pressure on the dwindling stock of edible fish.

A further factor of concern in sustainable development in SIDS and many other small states has been the impact of unequal exploitative partnerships as part of a broader Dominant Social Paradigm (DSP).[6] This development model is a vestige of colonial times. In the past, it underpinned much of the work of, what Richard Peet has called the 'unholy trinity'– the IMF, the World Bank and WTO.[7] It is based on the belief that progress is best achieved by exporting proven western technical advances that have determined that western marginal productivity can continue to increase for the same levels as the factors of production, but which places no value at all on untraded cultural, social and natural assets. Its use is now being overtaken by the New Environmental Paradigm (NEP) which acknowledges the environmental impact of development and seeks to redress it by preventive and mitigating measures which value natural resources and include them explicitly in the system of social welfare accounts. This transition in development values is emerging in the practices of both local people and their international partners in the public and the private sectors and in civil society.

In the sociological literature partners are functionally divided into two groups: first, those deriving from primary community relationships; and second, those derived from association (such as through employment, professional associations or professional bodies).[8] The community-type relationships are linked by blood, family, neighbourhood and other wider, largely geographically defined ties. The members of these partnerships share cultural and moral values and their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour are affected by these determinants. By contrast, partnerships derived from association arise from commercial, company, professional, legal and corporate links. The members of these partnerships share corporate objectives, the acceptance of specialisation and corporate business management frameworks which strongly reflect and influence the beliefs, attitudes and behaviour of the members.

This separate classification of the nature of partnerships is less distinctive in small states because of their limited size and the close melding of community and association-type relationships in public and private sector activity. This in turn affects the responsiveness of people and corporate bodies in small states to the acceptance of the need from transition from DSP as the core of the development process to the more sustainable NEP.

Moreover, for those small states seeking progress through sustainable development, the NEP attributes value to natural resource access at local level, but for it to succeed requires the

development of a new partnership with social welfare, law and environmental accounting at national level and in the operation of the international financial institutions. These two elements at the periphery and the centre are essential for the transition to NEP, but have yet to operate in harmony in many SIDS.

Without such new approaches to conceptual, social, economic and legal frameworks, the threat of the Tragedy of the Commons becomes a pervasive reality.[9] The Millennium Development Goals can be seen as a step along this adaptive pathway, despite their many shortcomings.[10] Some analysts, however, even see the pursuit of MDGs as a mechanism for reinforcing colonial style welfare paternalism, keeping the developing countries in a continued state of dependency aided by the international financial institutions who show scant regard for sustainability in the exploitation of natural resources.[11]

Cutting through these dilemmas the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting of November 2009 agreed 'The Declaration of Port of Spain: Partnering for a More Equitable and Sustainable Future'. The Declaration included in particular a joint recognition of the need for reform of the international financial institutions, in the following terms:

'We [...] give our full support to the process of reform of international financial institutions and call for the urgent and comprehensive implementation of reform that responds to the needs of all countries. We should also seek to create mechanisms within established institutions that can assist small and vulnerable states.'

The Declaration went on to say:

> 'The Commonwealth is a platform for its membership to communicate, share ideas and co-ordinate action across large geographical and cultural distances. It can therefore generate and sustain effective international action on global challenges. As a result of its diversity and representativeness, the Commonwealth can strengthen old partnerships and forge new ones in order to play a leadership role in the international arena for the promotion of a more equitable and sustainable future for all, and particularly to work as an advocate for small and vulnerable states. Together, we pledge to act as a catalyst for positive change in the international community in these challenging times.'

The Declaration thus recognised the advocacy role of the Commonwealth for its member state partners in promoting sustainable development with special emphasis on the needs of small and vulnerable states. While being economically, culturally and environmentally vulnerable, many small states have other common positive characteristics that should be recognised as a key to effective partnerships for sustainable development. They have a low ecological footprint, which is essential to maintain as their ecologies are fragile.[12] Smallness puts people close to government but, with family, clan and geographical communities acting as a brake on forms of development, indigenous values can be undermined.[13] In many cases, fragmentation across many islands can provide protection against unilateral development processes that are not well adapted to local needs and values.

Without more local awareness and understanding by development partners, small states are especially vulnerable to ecosystem decay and collapse, more so now in the face of the prospects of climate change, invasive alien species and sea level rise.[14] Technical support for sustainable development for small states has to be adapted and well attuned to their special needs if it is to work well.

Regional, inter-regional and international partnerships

In small states, smallness itself presents severe limitations on the development of association-type partnerships. It inhibits, for example, local specialisation requiring large numbers to provide adequate demand which few small states even at national level can generate. Large numbers of students are also required for the sustained supply of education and training of specialists and their proper regulation to ensure high performance standards. Small states may tend, therefore, to rely on importing outside experts as there may be no suitable local people to send away for training abroad. Orientation and training of experts may be necessary to ensure their support is adapted well to meet the needs and challenges of remote small states. This problem is not always evident, and inappropriate advice may frustrate real progress in small states where even ideologically inspired international NGOs may be found merely exporting alien perspectives and values in trying to establish effective partnerships with their local counterparts.[15] Even with the best will, international NGOs, when promulgating their perspectives and values, can have an adverse impact on trying to establish counterpart relationships in countries in which they work. At the same time local people can make similar mistakes and worse. The essential issue is the acceptance of evidence-based development by all partners at local level.

Recent developments in international, regional and inter-regional partnerships across the three regions of small island developing states (SIDS) provide a promising means for overcoming this obstacle by adapting specialist technical and professional development to the local needs of specific island states. Regional associations focused on specific themes of sustainable development have been flourishing, especially in the Caribbean (see Box 2.1).

International technical associations such as the World Meteorological Association (WMO), the World Resources Institute (WRI), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) provide valuable evidence for partnership support. Partnerships in policy development come through links with inter-regional and intergovernmental bodies such as the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and The Commonwealth Secretariat who have done much to provide a forum for debate and a channel for providing technical co-operation.[17]

Emerging capacity development models including mentoring and peer-learning networks have shown success, especially in the Pacific region including Pacific Invasives Learning Network, Micronesians in Conservation and the Pacific Islands Managed and Protected Area Network.

The contribution of these partnerships to development varies. Some are involved mainly in methodological and data reference services, others more in the supervision of large research and development projects and some in the management of direct action arising from methodological advances, reference data and regional development projects.

Over the past decades, the UN and other international bodies have supplied extensive support to provide frameworks for partnership in promoting and establishing common policies for sustainable development with the needs of small states in mind. The process of policy development has been widely accepted and has provided the basis for SIDS in particular to plan to move forward in defined stages. The process has typically entailed consultation, the formulation of international strategies, the formulation of treaties,

Box 2.1 CARICOM partnerships for development

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) was formed under the Treaty of Chaguaramas which established the Caribbean Community including the Caribbean Common Market. The Treaty was signed in 1973, in Chaguaramas, Trinidad and Tobago by Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. The Treaty was revised in 2001, establishing the Caribbean Community including the CARICOM Single Market and Economy.

The Caribbean Community is a partnership of Caribbean states with a well developed array of institutions. The main policy bodies of CARICOM are:

- The Conference of Heads of Government (and its Bureau)
- The Community Council of Ministers (The Community Council)

CARICOM (www.caricom.org) has a Secretariat and the following principal policy organs:

- The Council for Finance and Planning (COFAP)
- The Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED)
- The Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR)
- The Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD)
- The Council of Ministers responsible for National Security and Law Enforcement

In addition, CARICOM has developed a series of institutions to provide partnership arrangements for the region across the principal thematic fields identified under the Barbados Programme of Action and the UN 2005 SIDS Mauritius Strategy, notably:[16]

- **Climate change:** Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC)
- **Disasters:** Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA)
- **Coastal and Marine:** Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM)
- **Land:** Caribbean Agriculture Research and Development Institute (CARDI)
- **Transport:** Caribbean Aviation Safety and Securing Oversight System (CASSOS) (2008)
- **Science and technology:** Caribbean Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ); University of the West Indies (UWI)
- **Trade:**
  The Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED)
  Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce
  CARICOM Competition Commission]
  Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce
- **Development and Education:** Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC)
- **Health:** Caribbean Environment Health Institute (CEHI) (Agreement establishing the Caribbean Health Institute); Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI)
- **Information:** Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU)
- **Culture:** The Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD)

accords and regulations and their subsequent ratification by national governments. Progress with this process has been facilitated by national conferences, the drawing up of formal documents of accord and the commitment at national level to the establishment of national legislation. This has been undertaken principally by international bodies, such as the UN and its technical agencies (UNDP, UNEP, WHO), ministers, national parliaments and their supporting legal officers. The next stage of implementation and enforcement has been more problematic, especially for those small states who now find themselves overwhelmed with international commitments to which they have real difficulty in responding.[18]

Partnership through international aid has operated for over 50 years and now provides an international aid programme which is annually in excess of US$45 billion. This has been the subject of detailed scrutiny following years of concerns from both donors and recipients over its focus, its constraints and its effectiveness. The principles of the Paris Declaration of 2005 and the follow-up High Level Forum in Accra in 2008 have both provided new principles for development aid and fuelled the debate on the value and impact of international programmes (see Boxes 2.2 and 2.3).[19]

Box 2.2 Guiding principles for improving the effectiveness of partnership through international aid

2002 International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey

The Monterrey Conference marked the first quadripartite exchange of views between governments, civil society, the business community and the institutional stakeholders on global economic issues. These global discussions involved over 800 participants. The conference recognised the link between financing development and attaining internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration.

2005 Rome Declaration on Harmonisation

This declaration set out an ambitious programme of activities to:

- Ensure that harmonisation efforts are adapted to the country context and that donor assistance is aligned with the development recipient's priorities;
- Expand country-led efforts to streamline donor procedures and practices;
- Review and identify ways to adapt institutions' and countries' policies, procedures, and practices to facilitate harmonisation; and
- Implement the good practices principles and standards formulated by the development community as the foundation for harmonisation.

2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness

This declaration expressed the international community's consensus on the direction for reforming aid delivery and management to achieve improved effectiveness and results. This third High Level Conference produced 100 signatories to the declaration from partner governments, bilateral and multilateral donor agencies, regional development banks, and international agencies, committing to specific actions that would promote the effective use of aid funds.

Principles. The Paris Declaration is grounded on five mutually reinforcing principles:

- **Ownership:** Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies and strategies, and co-ordinate development actions.
- **Alignment:** Donors base their overall support on partner countries' national development strategies, institutions, and procedures.
- **Harmonisation:** Donors' actions are more harmonised, transparent, and collectively effective.
- **Managing for results:** Managing resources and improving decision-making for development results.
- **Mutual accountability:** Donors and partners are accountable for development results.

Commitments. The Paris Declaration contains 56 partnership commitments to improve the quality of aid. For example, under ownership, partner countries commit to exercise leadership in developing and implementing their national development strategies, and donors commit to respect partner countries' leadership and help strengthen their capacity to exercise it.

Indicators and Targets. The Paris Declaration also sets out 12 indicators to provide a measurable and evidence-based way to track progress, and sets targets for 11 of the indicators for the year 2010.

Increasing concern has emerged through the financial crisis 2008–2011 and its impact on the global aid programmes. In addition, challenges have emerged about the functioning of international NGOs and the bias that is introduced when donor support is linked to a commitment to purchase donor country goods and services.[20] Equally, consultants may have little understanding of the developing country needs and capacities. As a result, many international programmes to improve the relevance and effectiveness of their partnerships have developed stricter guidelines and procedures, including independent evaluation of achievements.

The response to these international accords for more effective partnerships has been trailing and so far has proved of only marginal benefit to small and island states. The MSI has set out 20 priority areas for development in SIDS, with thematic and management guidelines on improving current practice, monitoring process linked through the UN General Assembly, linking the programmes of the UN agencies to the priority areas for action, and with oversight by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) and AOSIS. While SIDS are small in size, population, wealth, and political power, their sensitive ecologies do offer the opportunity for low-cost initiatives in sustainable development which could yield rapid results; they also present, in the absence of more conservation, the source of immediate evidence of the adverse impact of human development on natural resources as small islands are host to some of the most endangered species worldwide.[21] These principles are echoed in a further initiative for developed states aimed at providing better governance for the development process. It has been pursued by the OECD through its Development Assistance Committee. This embraces various dimensions of the partnership for development agenda through dedicated networking groups including:

- Poverty reduction;
- Development evaluation;
- Gender equality;
- Governance and capacity development; and
- Environment for development.

In the Environment for Development Network in 2009, the OECD published guidelines for mainstreaming environmental issues in the development process.[22] These sought to ensure that programmes for development take into account the implications of climate change, the impact on water supplies and sanitation, and the management capacity for low carbon development. Much of this has relevance to the welfare of countries, including SIDS, beyond the ambit of OECD.

One further initiative to improve partnerships for small states and islands has been in the development of academic and professional partnerships through regional university institutions such as the University of the West Indies, the University of the South Pacific and the University of the Indian Ocean. Business schools are also re-orientating their programmes to take account of sustainability issues.[23]

Under the Economic Partnerships Agreements, the European Union (EU) has been working with 75 African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries since 2002 to negotiate

Box 2.3 Accra Forum on Aid Effectiveness

2008 Accra High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness

The high level engagement at Accra helped bring about agreement on the Accra Agenda for Action which expresses the international community's commitment to further increase aid effectiveness. The Accra Forum in Ghana took place with the participation of about 1,700 participants, including more than 100 ministers and heads of agencies from developing and donor countries, emerging economies, UN and multilateral institutions, global funds, foundations, and 80 civil society organisations. The Forum produced 12 indicators for monitoring progress:

Accra Indicators of Progress

To be measured nationally and monitored internationally:

1. Partners have operational development strategies
2. Reliable country systems
3. Aid flows are aligned on national priorities
4. Strengthen capacity by co-ordinated support
5. Use of country public financial management systems
6. Percentage of aid flows
7. Strengthen capacity by avoiding parallel implementation structures
8. Aid is more predictable
9. Use of common arrangements or procedures
10. Encourage shared analysis
11. Results-oriented frameworks
12. Mutual accountability

A fourth high-level meeting is planned for November 2011 in Busan, the Republic of Korea, to review progress with increasing aid effectiveness in the light of concerns for delays in meeting targets.

For details on the accords on effective partnerships for international aid see: www.un.org/esa/ffd/ffdconf/, www.oecd.org/dataoecd/11/41/34428351.pdf and www.accrahlf.net/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/ACCRAEXT/0,,contentMDK:21690872~menuPK:64861438~pagePK:64861884~piPK:64860737~theSitePK:4700791,00.html

agreements to remove barriers to trade and to open up new opportunities.[24] These forms of agreement have not been without controversy, raising questions on the neo-colonial interest of the EU countries and the impact of the process on poor people.[25] Despite these concerns, the more developed countries in the ACP such as Mauritius are negotiating similar agreements with the emerging market economies including Brazil, China, Russia, Malaysia, Singapore and Turkey.

How far partnership through development programmes has succeeded in changing the prospects and progress of poor communities and countries has been the focus of new styles of support initiatives in the last decade, notably the Millennium Villages Project in Africa, the effective Interventions Programme of the London School of Economics, and the process of micro-finance being promoted in many countries following its popular development in Asia.[26]

These initiatives have aroused considerable controversy, both at the level of the validation of local results and in the credentials in economic and development theory (see Box 2.4). The critical reviews of the value of such partnerships in development range from the doubts of sustaining probity in political and managerial supervision to the logical and ethical constraints in establishing valid scientific frameworks for evaluating results. The attempts to design studies in line with the rigours of clinical, scientific, random, controlled trials have largely proved elusive but, in some cases, may offer opportunities for tightening methodology and responding to the doubts.

Box 2.4 Millennium Villages Project through community partnerships

Through the Earth Institute, under the direction of Professor Jeffrey Sachs, the project includes 80 villages in sub-Saharan Africa.

The objectives are to:

- Promote sustainable, scaleable, community-led progress toward the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals through the use of scientifically validated interventions –one village at a time;
- Ensure African ownership of the Millennium Development Goals, and work in partnership with African governments and regional groups;
- Increase capacity and community empowerment in Africa through training and knowledge sharing with local African governments, NGOs, and village communities;
- Partner with the public and private sectors, innovative NGOs, universities and leading experts, and the international donor community throughout Africa and the world continually to improve and co-ordinate development strategies (funding amounts to $US110 per person per year for 5-10 years in the project villages); and
- Transform rural sub-subsistence farming economies into small-scale enterprise development economies and promote diversified entrepreneurs.

Results

Results after three years show income levels rising; malnutrition falling; school enrolment up; gender participation improved; malaria incidence halved; better communication and intravillage trade. See: www.millenniumpromise.org/site/DocServer/Executive_SummaryUSE.pdf?docID=861

Critical points of view

The project has been attracting much interest – and inevitably critical views. For example:

- Slow pace of support from local government;
- Cluster concept for linking villages constrained by lack of enough aid workers;
- Scaling-up to a marketing phase for products is proving difficult;
- Timescale needs to be extended to 2015 and beyond to achieve reduced aid dependence;
- Another example of central UN planning that will fail;
- Has not diversified its agricultural sector to promote sustainability; and
- Has no plans for how the project will become sustainable after the initial aid programme pulls out.

For new effective partnerships for sustainable development, what is perhaps more important than the distribution of cash in accordance with these principles, is the development of professional and technical capacities in each of the thematic areas for action. Such capacity building is a prerequisite for effective development partnerships. But it needs to be defined in terms of the technical requirements of each thematic area. This requires:

- Definition of the basic evidence for action with the supporting conceptual theory;
- Guidelines of best practice;
- Accredited syllabus for basic and continuing education;
- Professional body for training, examinations and professional discipline;
- Monitoring and evaluation;
- Research and development; and
- Accredited scientific literature, journals and professional communication systems.

The EU has for many years adopted logical frameworks for planning projects, despite the limitations of such frameworks as development tools and their inflexibility in operational management. To resolve some of these issues the EU, working with many partners, has added regulations arising from recommendations from the Paris and Accra Declarations. In the medium term, however, these do not resolve the issues of programme continuation beyond the immediate external funding and the assimilation of project findings within the mainstream of country development policy.

More recently, the EU has started agreeing EU MDG contracts which link projects to the results base implicit in the pursuit of MDGs and their country-specific targets.[27] Parallel to this initiative is the focus on sustainable development of EU funding in the support programme for East and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean countries.[28] This programme provides for inter-country linkage between SIDS, and the adaptation of inter-regional best practice for local use, building on flagship models which have been agreed through expert panels and national consultation. This incorporates the concept of working with centres of excellence. In this initiative the centre is developing support functions for small states relating to education, training, consultation, expert networks, information analysis, publications and research and development. Thus, the focus for partnership development is moving here to the knowledge base and the technical services support, rather than emergency and life support or trade in goods.

Singapore has adopted another model of partnerships, the cluster model (CM), for promoting innovation.[29] This is based on the idea that progress is made through linking together people with complementary skills and technologies, rather than trying to spot potential success by nurturing niche industries, products or services (see Box 2.5). The cluster concept has been adopted by UNDESA as a means of linking complementary elements of the MDG programme. This aims to ensure that critical elements in sustainable development are not neglected, by promoting partnerships between programmes that are thematically inter-related but previously not necessarily closely linked.[30]

The recent re-examination of economic and development strategy emerging from the 2008–2011 financial crisis has stimulated many small countries to review their partnerships policies. Asian countries are increasingly looking to local partnerships for trade as a

Box 2.5 Singapore Cluster Partnership Model

South–south linkages through clusters

Singapore has been noted for its practical application of the concept of development clusters in its promotion of industrial innovation, and this has attracted worldwide interest. Its clusters, developed in the petrochemical industry and in marine logistics, have served as models for development elsewhere.

In May 2009 in Singapore, 30 senior officials from Africa and the World Bank were exposed to Singapore's experience in developing special economic zones and competitive clusters. Small country representatives at this meeting included The Gambia and Mauritius. The leading institution in this field in Singapore is International Enterprise Singapore (IE). IE is linked to World Bank's Africa department to help Singapore-based companies navigate the African continent, working with the International Finance Corporation and African Development Bank expertise, which have extensive networks and business knowledge of the continent. In this context, Singapore has been offering in particular core competencies in its cluster of marine logistics, which are relevant to coastal and small island states.

The cluster concept

A **business cluster** is a geographic concentration or agglomeration of interconnected business suppliers and associated institutions in a particular field. Clusters serve to increase the productivity across groups of companies working in close contact, enabling them to compete, nationally and globally.

The term **industry cluster**, also known as a **business cluster**, **competitive cluster** or **Porterian cluster**, is a generic term popularised by Michael Porter in *The Competitive Advantage of Nations* (1990) and 'Economics of Competition' (1998) in the *Harvard Business Review*. The importance of economic geography, or more correctly of geographical economics, was also brought to attention by Paul Krugman in *Geography and Trade* (1991), MIT Press. Cluster development has since become a focus for many government programmes.

There can be different types of clusters, including:

- **Geographical clusters:** such as Silicon Valley, Paris Haute Couture, Hollywood and Bollywood;
- **Sectoral clusters** (a cluster of businesses operating together from within the same commercial sector;
- **Horizontal clusters** (interconnections between businesses at a sharing of resources level, e.g. knowledge management); and
- **Vertical clusters** (i.e. a supply chain cluster).

The underlying concept of clusters, which economists have referred to as 'agglomeration economies', dates from the nineteenth century work of Alfred Marshall. The concept explains the economic benefits of urban areas, but beyond a certain point further agglomeration gives rise to diseconomies of scale due to congestion or pollution and, according to classical Marxist dialectic theory, the concentration (or clustering) of political and industrial power in the underclass of the proletariat and the collapse of the state through revolution.

The experience of Singapore's petrochemical sector suggests that government, as a facilitating partner, is not a master strategist, but creates opportunities for cluster participants to organise, identify and solve common problems, and then the private sector leadership will emerge to drive the process.

See: Jayarethanam Pillai (2006) Importance of Clusters in Industry Development: A Case of Singapore's Petrochemical Industry. See http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/EASTASIAPACIFICEXT/SINGAPOREEXTN/0,,contentMDK:22029117~menuPK:272837~pagePK:1497618~piPK:217854~theSitePK:272832,00.html [last accessed July 2011].

hedge against the uncertainties of East-West alliances. While regional economic integration and even monetary union have had their attractions and adherents, many countries are operating on policies of variable geometry in their development partnerships, combining regional, historical and fresh bilateral elements in their search for long-term sustainability.

These new wide ranging patterns of partnerships initially incur heavy costs through establishing and maintaining diplomatic and technical linkage. These costs can be accommodated to some degree within regional intergovernmental arrangements. But the cost-effectiveness of compromising national sovereignty has to be continually assessed.

The interest in environmental issues such as climate change, sea level rise, water security, energy efficiency, the spread of invasive alien species, sustainable fisheries and forest management is not, of course, limited to SIDS. Moreover, many large developed states have direct responsibilities for their own small dependent islands of which there are thousands worldwide. These two factors will give rise to a closer understanding of sustainability issues in island territories, a widening evidence base and will give SIDS more confidence in relevance, specificity and value of partnerships with larger developed states. Both SIDS and such partners will become more expert in evidence-based assessments of initiatives and more inclined to share experiences on an equal footing.

This can be seen in the development of global partnerships on coral reef rehabilitation involving large countries such as the USA with its many islands including those of the state of Hawaii. These countries are now linking with SIDS to explore the most cost-effective interventions in this field.[31] In these partnerships the relationship is mutually advantageous. The traditional fishers and the new technology fishers can learn much from each other. Through this process the value of indigenous knowledge could rise and the hierarchy of knowledge-based partnership be transformed. The rapid evolution of ICT could facilitate this transformation of partnerships, allowing rapid knowledge transmission on a wider scale and in an increasingly expert form, with small developing states leap-frogging through the traditional development process.

For many countries it is important to review the opportunities for international finance and technical support in the light of local priorities relating to, for example, poverty reduction, education development, and water and sanitation. For as Roy Bridger has perceptively observed:

> 'Man aspires to the stars, but if he can only get his sewerage and refuse distributed and utilised in an orderly fashion he will be doing well.'[32]

The population pressure on land continues to present challenges for new partnerships to focus on humanity's impact on the ecosystem on which all life depends. In 1900 this planet offered eight hectares of land per person on which to thrive. By 1950 the population had increased to the point where the planet had only five hectares of land per person. In 2005 the ratio was two hectares of land per person. The present world population is about 7 billion and is expected to increase to over 9 billion by 2050, shrinking the available space to just 1.5 hectares per person.[33]

In 2001 the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment found that 60 per cent of ecosystem services had been degraded and are unsustainable in the face of a growing demand for

food, fresh water, timber, fibre and fuel.[34] This degradation, principally from over-use, is exacerbated by pollution and by the process of climate change intimately linked to current patterns of production and consumption.

Since 1900 the global economic development gains have been immense in terms of income, trade, increased expectation of life and improved standards of living. These gains, however, have been unevenly distributed and with inadequate concern for the impact of such transformation on the ecosystems. Those moving away from the DSP and favouring the NEP as a framework will need to promote new partnerships to address inequity in the inter-regional sustainability, conservation of natural resources and the impact of this on human welfare.

Conclusions

The economic and environmental vulnerability of small states combined with their light ecological footprint presents them with a special opportunity to be global study areas for new partnerships for sustainable development initiatives and sensitive locations for monitoring ecological decay. For many small states, despite high transport costs for external goods and services, their small scale makes it relatively cheap to undertake initiatives, and the vulnerability of their ecosystems means that results are directly and rapidly evident. The big issue is how far new partnerships in sustainability management can succeed in rescuing such fragile ecosystems making them resilient in the face of all the threats they face from within and without. The MSI is one model that is being tried with varied results. The leadership of the Micronesia Challenge and Caribbean Challenge in terms of commitment to conservation and livelihoods could serve as models if the commitment made by leaders of these countries and the resulting interest by development partners and others in supporting these commitments is sustained and delivers the best results. The design and principles inherent in the Millennium Village Project provide lessons for adaptation of this model to small and island states ensuring that the community at local level are equal partners in the process of management. Clusters offer synergy between linkable activities which have proved effective in a variety of endeavours. Whichever will prove best in each location, it is too early to judge.

New patterns of regional and international partnerships are emerging as small and island states become more mature in their response to available local and external technical and financial support. Moreover, the policies of international agencies themselves are increasingly adapting to the need for independent evaluation of effectiveness of aid and pursuit of results-based design. This is a slow process with many setbacks. The closer monitoring that is now involved should allow initiatives to emerge that are based more on the evidence of their impact rather than merely the logic of their design and the principles adopted in their management.

These changes in the mode of international partnerships may well benefit from a transformation of the architecture for international financial institutions to give a more effective voice to the developing and emerging economies. The UN system and other organisations that work with small island states need to be more co-ordinated in their support across the whole range of the agencies involved. Professional and technical development in those fields

most relevant to sustainable development in SIDS, should be accelerated as the university consortia in the three regions establish increasingly relevant programmes and centres of excellence for education, training and professional development to meet the local needs.[35] Other critical factors include political leadership at all levels and in all sectors, plus community-based training and capacity building.

The new variable geometry of partnerships is encouraging fresh linkage between countries and is especially giving greater influence to the emerging economies. The greater use of ICT is allowing the concept of partnerships through clusters to progress less in terms of geographical location and more in terms of conceptual linkage.

Much work in sustainable development and environmental management is at present at the margin of science and more in the field of research and development, from which many of the established forms of partnership, financial and technical control, struggle to promote useful results. New trends in partnerships are giving more dominance to community knowledge and support and revisiting the evidence base for action by setting up initiatives in ways which more readily give rise to results of their impact. What is emerging from these new ways of working is that the more that can be learned by all partners melding indigenous and new high-technology knowledge, the more workable and effective action can be undertaken to save the planet from ecological, economic and social decay.

Notes

1. Probably an ancient Chinese proverb.
2. Guthrie (2005).
3. Polybius (1889).
4. See www.millenniumvillages.org [last accessed 26 May 2011].
5. Edelman (2010).
6. Nath (2010).
7. Peet (2009).
8. Notably contributed by Ferdinand Torres and Max Weber. See Weber (1920) and Carnie et al. (eds) (2005).
9. Derived from an iconic paper in 1968 by Garrett Hardin, this metaphor identifies the disastrous end result of unrestrained freedom in the use of common pool resources such as common land and the sea, in which people become trapped by their own competitive impulses and ultimately destroy the use of the common inheritance. The common resource can be sustained only by agreed regulation which limits the freedoms previously enjoyed. Examples are to be found in the use of common grazing, forest land and marine resources. In these cases, as demand increases with population growth, so the carrying capacity is reached and limitations have to be placed on use through some regulatory control such as price, rationing by volume or the introduction of new forms of property rights.
10. Roberts (2010).
11. Reinart (2007).
12. See www.wiserearth.org/resource/view/db64c421772954f3d6d9ef1f93ab88cb/group/weversity [last accessed May 2011].

13. This, however, may have some paradoxical effects where people are operating at clan or family level as the primary group where they support action against broader community values. Thus, in some island cultures where there is strong traditional leadership, if that leadership decides on action which damages the environment, there may be no one who speaks up against it.
14. Quammen (1997).
15. Higgins (2004).
16. Details of the remit of all these organisations can be obtained on the CARICOM website www.caricom.org/sitemap.jsp.
17. See www.wri.org, www.iucn.org, www.iisd.ca, www.coi-ioc.org and www.thecommonwealth.org [all accessed May 2011].
18. On 8 February 2010, Dr the Hon Arvin Boolell, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade in Mauritius, chaired the first Steering Committee at ministerial level on the review of International Agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (MoU). A list has been compiled of over 500 MoUs and agreements out of which some 200 are currently effective and require no particular attention, while the rest (more than 300) have either lapsed or are dormant. The Minister has called for these international obligations to be reviewed and re-activated and to ensure concrete results and follow-ups are undertaken. See www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=303227614384&comments&ref=mf [last accessed May 2011].
19. See www.oecd.org/document/18/0,3343,en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00.html, and www.oecd.org/document/3/0,3343,en_2649_3236398_41297219_1_1_1_1,00.html [both accessed May 2011].
20. Agg (2006).
21. Quammen (1997) op. cit.
22. See www.oecd.org/dac/environment [last accessed May 2011].
23. Edelmann (2010).
24. See www.acp-eu-trade.org [last accessed May 2011].
25. See Action Aid's reservations and call for opposition to the policy process, which it claims favours the rich countries and multinationals, www.actionaid.org.uk/index.asp?page_id=101017 [last accessed May 2011].
26. See www.aideffectiveness.org [last accessed May 2011].
27. See www.eurostep.org [last accessed July 2011].
28. Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles.
29. See Porter (1998); Krugman (1991).
30. UNDESA (2005).
31. See www.coralreef.gov/international/mainb.html [last accessed May 2011].
32. Roy Bridger, *New York Times* correspondent: See *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* (2005), Oxford.
33. Schomaker et al. (eds).
34. See www.millenniumassessment.org [last accessed May 2011].
35. Caribbean, Pacific, and the AIMS regions.

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