

MUTUALITY AND PARTNERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS: A CASE STUDY OF A TRIANGULAR
COOPERATION EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

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Declaration

This research report is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree in any other university

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Dedication

To all the small groups and institutions involved in one development partnership or the other. You contribute to the changes in our societies that we all dream about.

Summary

This research project seeks to understand the influence of mutuality on the effectiveness of a partnership through a case study of a school triangular cooperation partnership. This is a partnership between members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee and pivotal countries to implement programmes or projects in beneficiary countries. This form of cooperation is seen as a complement of both North-South and South-South cooperation. To achieve this, triangular cooperation is guided by a number of principles one of which is mutuality. Mutuality is seen as a means of creating win-win situations for the parties involved and is considered a success factor for effective partnerships. However, even in the practice of South-South cooperation (that is viewed as most mutual), critics observe that this win-win situation is never achieved. The importance of this principle in the practice of effective triangular cooperation is thus put to doubt.

Therefore, the main objective of the study is to determine to what extent the variations in mutuality influence the effectiveness of Triangular cooperation education partnerships. This analysis is based on mutuality indicators of effective communication and coordination, participation and inclusivity, mutual accountability and, mutual resource contribution and access. The existence of these indicators in the partnership is investigated and then a further analysis of their influence on the partnership effectiveness indicators of goal achievement and partner satisfaction is done.

The study is carried out as a qualitative case study. The study areas are three schools involved in the partnership in Malawi (Bambino Primary School), Zimbabwe (St. Paul's Primary School) and in Norway (Trosvik Skole). Primary data was collected from respondents from these three schools categorized in two: partnership leaders and committee members. The data was collected through in-depth interviews and semi-structured questionnaires for the leaders and committee members respectively. Key informants drawn from the education, public and non-governmental sectors were also used as data sources. Secondary data sources were from books, journals and partnership documents. The analysis of the data was through content analysis.

Key research findings show that this partnership started as a triangular cooperation from the onset and that it exhibits typical triangular cooperation characteristics as discussed in literature. The partnership formation process was initiated and handled by the Norway coordinator with little involvement of the two South schools. The Norway school is the donor partner while the Malawi school seems to be the

pivotal partner with the Zimbabwe school being the beneficiary partner. The research reveals a lack of consensus on the importance of mutuality in triangular cooperation though there is some agreement on the view that in reality, it is often realized in varying degrees. In regard to the mutuality indicators, the extent of their realization differs with more emphasis on communication and coordination and accountability than on the other two. On partnership effectiveness, the findings indicate that not all partnership goals are achieved hence negatively affecting the effectiveness score of the partnership. The partner satisfaction indicator however shows a lot of positive findings. The influence of mutuality indicators on the effectiveness indicators shows that the three indicators, communication and coordination, mutual accountability and, participation and inclusivity have the most influence on the effectiveness of a partnership. This is especially true for their influence on partner satisfaction. The strongest link between the two variables however has to do with mutual accountability. The links between the goal achievement indicator of effectiveness and the mutuality indicators and; mutual resource contribution and access indicator of mutuality and the effectiveness indicators however are not as clear as the other links.

The study recommends further studies on the relationship between goal achievement and the mutuality of partnerships to ascertain whether there is any link and what the nature of such a link is. A recommendation is also made on more inclusion and participation of the committee members in the decision making process of the partnership as they seem to have valuable input as implementers.

Key words: *Triangular cooperation; Malawi, Norway and Zimbabwe; Mutuality; Partnership Effectiveness*

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Abbreviations

| | |
|--------|---|
| BAPA | Buenos Aires Plan of Action |
| OECD | Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| IBSA | India, Brazil and South Africa |
| ECOSOC | United Nations Economic and Social Council |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| TCDC | Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries |
| NEPAD | New Partnership for Africa's Development |

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1: Overall introduction to the research topic

Different paths to development are available to developing countries. One of these is cooperation with other developing countries with the support of a developed country. This is Triangular Development Cooperation. The coming together of these countries in development partnerships has led to a quest to better understand these partnerships, to ascertain that the key foundational principles are realized or not and hence determine their importance. This study is about the Triangular Cooperation foundational principle of mutuality and its influence on the effectiveness of a Triangular Cooperation partnership. The specific focus is on education partnerships.

1.2: Background

Development cooperation has existed since the end of the Second World War when Western countries worked together towards the reconstruction of countries affected by the war. This cooperation was based in countries in Western Europe, North America and Japan and later on, countries that had similar political ideologies, either leaning towards the East or leaning towards the West. The success of the Marshall Plan increased the belief in development cooperation and especially with developing countries which had not been part of the Marshall Plan. This is considered the genesis of the North-South Cooperation (Blommaert *et al.*, 2009). This form of cooperation was for a long time and still is to some extent, asymmetrical in nature with the power tilting to the developed North.

However, due to the emergence of the asymmetrical North-South cooperation, newly formed nations (former colonies) and other developing countries in Asia and Africa and to a large extent Latin America came together with the ultimate goal being development. The 1955 Bandung conference and the 1978 Buenos Aires Conference were key conferences in cementing this concept. The Bandung Conference was a gathering of 29 Asian and African countries in Indonesia. It was the genesis of the idea of South-South Cooperation when the participating countries affirmed they would neither support the East nor the West but would pursue their own strategy. However, the first time that the concept and principles of South-South Cooperation were ever discussed on the world arena was during the 32nd Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1977. The following year, 1978 saw the convening of a conference solely for the discussion of South-South Cooperation in Buenos Aires. It was dubbed Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC). There were 138 countries represented at

the conference and they adopted the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA). This plan of action became the founding document of what is today known as South-South Cooperation in its technical dimension (Cabral and Weinstock, 2010; CAC/COSP, 2011 and; Xalma, 2011).

Even with the emergence of South-South Cooperation, there was the resolve by the different actors especially the High level committee on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries that this form of cooperation should not be a substitute of North-South Cooperation but rather a complementary one (Blommaert et al., 2009). This brought out the notion that there was need for a middle ground or an intermediate arrangement of the two forms of development cooperation. This was the genesis of Triangular Cooperation or North-South-South cooperation. This form of cooperation is meant to combine the strengths of North-South and South-South cooperation and is seen as providing win-win situations.

Development cooperation between the developing countries is based on a number of principles one of which is mutuality (Bilal, 2012 and; Cabral and Weinstock, 2010). Other principles include: equality, non-interference, non-conditionality and respect for sovereignty. Although all these principles have a bearing on the partnership outcome, the focus of this study is only on the principle of mutuality and its bearing on the effectiveness of a partnership and the partnership projects. All these principles are considered normative ideal principles. Mutuality comes from the word mutual which according to the Oxford Dictionary, can be used to describe an interdependent relationship between two or more people or things that creates a win-win situation. Pfisterer (2013) defines mutuality as the interdependence of partners to create joint value. Mutuality in development cooperation is a reciprocal relation between the different actors involved. Mutual benefit which is one of the aspects of mutuality has been cited as one of the key success factors in South-South and Triangular Cooperation. Other aspects include mutual confidence, accountability, learning, responsibility and mutual respect (Task Team on South-South Cooperation, 2010).

With this in mind, the study seeks to investigate the characteristics of an existing education partnership between schools in Norway, Malawi and Zimbabwe with a view to determining whether this a mutual partnership or not and whether this influences its effectiveness.

1.3: Problem statement

Development cooperation involves the coming together of any two or more actors in order to change the living conditions of vulnerable groups in society. It has however been characterized mainly by the flow of resources from advanced/developed countries (North) to developing countries (South). This is according to Kato (2012). This form of cooperation is not mutual in nature. As Brehm (2001) says of these North-South partnerships in relation to mutuality, 'in reality partnerships between Northern and Southern NGOs are generally unbalanced in favour of the North, given its control over resources.' Similarly, Hoyer (1994) draws the contrast between the ideal of mutual trust-based partnership and the reality of donor-recipient relationships, which result in paternalism. These imbalances have been the subject of criticism especially on the issue of what each partner gets out of the partnership.

Development cooperation among developing countries on the other hand is viewed by some authors as a possible way out of the exploitative relations with the developed countries (Jules and Silva, 2008). In addition to this, it has been hailed as having benefits or potential benefits for the development of the participating countries. This form of cooperation is also considered an important form of solidarity among developing countries and appears as an alternative to the status quo, an almost subversive strategy to strengthening developing countries both politically and economically (ECOSOC, 2009 and; Jules and Silva, 2008). Some of the benefits of engaging in Triangular Cooperation include the promotion of self-sufficiency through mutual learning and knowledge transfer. Theoretically, this form of cooperation is guided by a number of principles one of which is mutuality. Mutuality creates win-win situations through striking a balance between the differing interests of the partners. This principle is considered a key success factor for the partnerships (Zhao, 2002). These Triangular Cooperation partnerships are considered to bring a mutually beneficial development process.

However in reality, this is not always the case. Even cooperation between developing countries may reflect asymmetric relationships. As Fontaine and Seifert (2010) note, the concept of mutuality presumes a horizontal and equal interaction while neglecting the existence of economic and power asymmetries as well as the possibilities of dependencies between the countries of the South themselves. Carlsson (1982) also points out that in the case of South-South trade for instance, it is likely that a replication of the exploitative North-South trade relationship will occur and the weaker economies of the South will continue to lag behind. Therefore if this is the case in South-South partnerships that are considered most mutual, how feasible is the achievement of mutual Triangular

Cooperation partnerships? And more importantly, how critical is mutuality to the effectiveness of a partnership? A review of existing literature on Triangular Cooperation shows that there is little focus on actual mutuality of partnerships under this form of development cooperation. Furthermore, research on mutuality in development cooperation is based on North-South Cooperation (Johnson and Wilson, 2006). In other words, even though this principle is given prominence and considered a key success factor for partnerships under these forms of cooperation, there is little evidence of research done to verify this.

This study therefore seeks to do two things. First, it seeks to investigate the characteristics of an existing Triangular Cooperation partnership with the view to determining the variations of mutuality in the partnership and second, to determine the bearing of mutuality elements on the effectiveness elements of the partnership. The study will thus ascertain whether the two variables (mutuality and partnership effectiveness) affect each other and how they do so.

1.4: Research questions

1.4.1: Main research question

The main research question will be:

- To what extent do the variations in mutuality influence the effectiveness of the Triangular Cooperation education partnership?

1.4.2: Specific research questions

1. What are the characteristics of the Triangular Cooperation education partnership under study?
2. What indicators of mutuality are present in the Triangular Cooperation partnership project under study?
3. What are the differences in the nature of relationships between the partners in the Triangular Cooperation partnership being studied?
4. To what extent can the Triangular Cooperation partnership under study be considered an effective partnership?
5. How and to what extent do the variations in mutuality influence the achievement of an effective Triangular Cooperation education partnership?

1.5: Research objectives

The objectives of this study will be to:

1. Determine the characteristics of the Triangular Cooperation education partnership under study
2. Establish what indicators of mutuality are present in the Triangular Cooperation partnership under study
3. Determine the differences in the nature of relationships between the partners in the Triangular Cooperation under study
4. Determine whether the Triangular Cooperation partnership being studied is an effective partnership
5. Determine how and to what extent the variations in mutuality influences the effectiveness of the Triangular Cooperation education partnership being studied

The study will provide insight into the principle of mutuality in practice and determine its relationship to the effectiveness of Triangular Cooperation partnerships. The study will provide valuable information into this concept which is seen as a key success factor in the implementation and success of Triangular Cooperation. Groups already engaged in this form of cooperation and potential actors can then learn from this and strive to achieve more mutuality if the relationship between partnership effectiveness and mutuality is positive.

1.6: Significance of the study

The global landscape of development cooperation has been in a state of change: moving from the traditional North-South relationship and donor countries providing aid to the poorer nations of the world. There are different reasons for this change, among which (or because of which) is the rise of the Global South. Former aid recipient nations have developed to the point of supporting other developing countries. These nations of the South are realizing that their similarities are a strength and not a weakness. There is the realization that there are opportunities for mutual learning through knowledge and experience sharing and hence mutual benefit through cooperation. The traditional donors are not excluded in this changing landscape. They can work on improving their effectiveness by supporting South-South development projects through Triangular Cooperation. Therefore based on this, a closer study of the triangular partnerships in practice is warranted to better understand the intricacies of successfully implementing and sustaining this form of cooperation. Below are the expected contributions of this study:

1. The study is expected to contribute to available knowledge on the principle of mutuality in the practice in Triangular Cooperation. This will determine whether the achievement of mutuality in

the practice of this form of cooperation is possible and is as important as is highlighted in literature

2. Since the unit of analysis will be an existing Triangular Cooperation partnership by education institutions, this study will also contribute to the academic knowledge base on the engagement of this particular group of actors that as highlighted above, is wanting
3. The study will also contribute to academic knowledge base on Triangular Cooperation
4. This study is also expected to contribute to knowledge on the practice of Triangular Cooperation with the goal of improving formation and implementation of such partnerships.

Chapter Two: Literature review, theoretical and conceptual frameworks

This section will provide a review of the available theoretical and empirical literature on development cooperation and its different forms especially among developing countries. It will also provide a discussion on the principle of mutuality and partnership effectiveness in regard to Triangular Cooperation; provide a conceptual analysis of these two concepts and, the linkage between the two. Finally, there will be a presentation of the theoretical and analytical frameworks for the whole study.

2.1: Theoretical literature

2.1.1: Triangular Cooperation

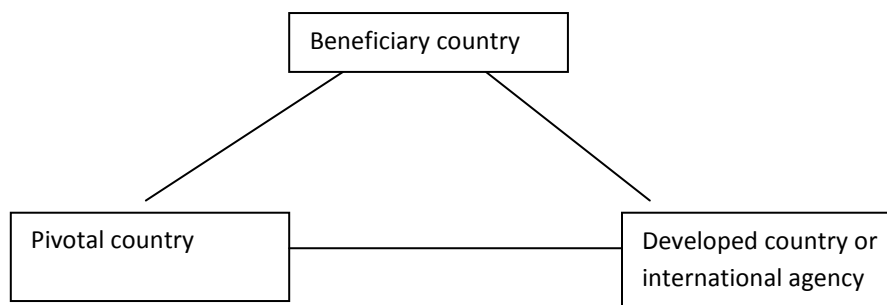
Triangular Cooperation does not have a definite agreed upon definition. Thus, there is also the use of adjectives like 'tripartite' and 'trilateral' when referring to this form of cooperation. For this study however, the term that will be used is Triangular Cooperation. The first time that this term was implicitly referred to was during the 1978 United Nations conference in Buenos Aires mentioned above. But the actual term 'Triangular Cooperation' originated in 1980 (OECD, 2013).

One of the definitions of Triangular Cooperation is that it is a partnership between members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee and pivotal countries to implement programmes or projects in beneficiary countries. Other definitions also include the presence of an international agency as an actor in this form of cooperation and not just the donor countries. It can be seen as an intermediate between bilateral and multilateral technical cooperation arrangements and between North-South Cooperation and South-South Cooperation as it combines the comparative advantages of different development actors. Triangular Cooperation is also seen as being able to assist in fuller exploitation of the potential of South-South Cooperation (Abdenur, 2007; Fordelone, 2009; OECD, 2013; and Ashoff, 2010). To further compound the issue of defining Triangular Cooperation, other authors also view Triangular Cooperation as trilateral cooperation between three developing countries. An example that has been given is the India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) partnership (ECOSOC, 2008). However, in some quarters this cooperation between developing countries is still seen as South-South Cooperation though at a multilateral level. Therefore, Triangular Cooperation may take the form of North-South-South or South-South-South. For this research project, the focus will be on the North-South-South form.

That being the case, there are different models of this form of cooperation. All are based on the point of triangular initiation: how was the cooperation started? The four models according to OECD (2013) are:

1. South-South Cooperation as the starting point: In this model, there is an already existing South-South Cooperation. Due to different reasons, a third partner joins. The partner in this case is a developed country or an international agency like UNDP.
2. Bilateral Cooperation between a provider of development cooperation and a pivotal country as the starting point: a developed country and a pivotal country get into an agreement to cooperate with a third beneficiary country.
3. Bilateral Cooperation between a provider of development cooperation and a beneficiary country as the starting point: a pivotal country joins an existing partnership between a developed country and a beneficiary country.
4. Triangular agreement as the starting point: this model of Triangular Cooperation involves the three partners coming into an agreement from the onset of the cooperation. They identify, negotiate, formulate and implement the activity. For this study, this fourth model of Triangular Cooperation will be the focus.

Figure 1: Triangular Cooperation Model 4



Source: OECD (2013)

The literature highlights the following as the main actors in a triangular partnership: governments, civil society organizations, education institutions and community groups from the developing countries also referred to as the beneficiary countries, emerging donor countries or the pivotal countries and developed countries who are traditional donors. The other actors are international organizations/agencies and civil society organizations (CSO). A key example of a pivotal country in Africa

is South Africa which is involved in both South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation initiatives across the continent and beyond. Most of the Triangular Cooperation takes place between countries within the same geographic region and based on a past North-South relationship with the traditional donor partner. However, there are examples of Triangular Cooperation partnerships that transcend even continents, an example being cooperation between Germany, Haiti and Brazil (Fordelone, 2009 and; Ashoff, 2010).

This study seeks to understand the interactions between the different actors and the nature of processes involved in the partnership. The analysis will therefore be based on the dependency theory of development. This theory has been chosen because it focuses on the interrelationships between the different actors in the cooperation.

2.1.2: Dependency theory

The Dependency theory was developed in the late 1950s under the guidance of Raul Prebisch. Other authors associated with this theory are Andre Gunder Frank and Wallerstein (Ferraro, 1996). According to these theorists, there are three characteristics attributed to this theory: the international system is comprised of two sets of states (dependent and dominant), there is the assumption that external forces are of singular importance to the economic activities within the dependent states and that the relations between dominant and dependent states are dynamic because the interactions between the two sets of states tend to not only reinforce but also intensify the unequal patterns. Dependency Theory reveals a lack of mutuality in the relationships between partner states with communication and resources flowing from one direction. In practice, this has been evident in the North-South development cooperation partnerships.

On the other hand according to Dependency theorists, the concept of South-South Cooperation is understood as a mechanism through which countries of the global South would be able to overcome dependence from the industrialized nations of the global North by strengthening the political, technical and economic cooperation among each other (Cardoso and Falleto, 2004 and; Senghaas, 1979 as quoted in Fontaine and Seifert, 2010). Jules and Silva (2008) also notes that within the neo-Marxist perspective, dependency theorists view South-South cooperation as a possible way out of the exploitative economic relations with the North. The Dependency theory sees the historical developments of the capitalist system as having generated underdevelopment in the peripheral satellites whose economic surplus was expropriated, while generating economic development in the metropolitan centres which appropriate

that surplus (Frank, 1970). Therefore, development could only occur through radical solutions. By cooperating amongst themselves, developing countries would, from their point of view, avoid the deteriorating terms of trade and circumvent the dependency ties that keep them underdeveloped and subordinate (Bokhari, 1989).

Triangular Cooperation should assist in the fuller exploitation of the potential of South-South Cooperation. Therefore analysing the Triangular Cooperation in the light of the Dependency theory approach will help determine how far the Triangular Cooperation partnership under study can be considered mutual in nature and hence contribute to their effectiveness.

2.2: Empirical literature

This section presents literature on the research subtopics. Starting with a review of literature on general development cooperation then an in-depth discussion on Triangular Cooperation and finally a discussion of both mutuality and partnership effectiveness and their effect on each other provides the empirical literature for this study.

2.2.1: Development Cooperation

Development cooperation is the coming together of two or more actors in order to change the living conditions of vulnerable groups in society. However, development cooperation has been defined chiefly as transfers of sophisticated hardware and software originating in advanced countries to underdeveloped countries and in practice it has been characterized mainly as the flow of resources from advanced/developed countries to developing countries (Kato, 2012). The reason for this could be because of its genesis. Development cooperation has its roots in the post-World War 2 initiatives that had the goal of reconstructing countries affected by the war. After the success of the Marshall Plan, there was the belief that foreign aid can be effective and hence the support for development cooperation. Development cooperation with the inclusion of developing countries was highlighted in the 1949 Truman Doctrine. This is considered as the starting point of the modern development cooperation. Most of the cooperation that ensued until early 1960s was bilateral as it involved only two countries. The late 1970s saw the emergence of multilateral development cooperation. This is where the funding for the cooperation comes from a number of countries (Blommaert *et al.*, 2009).

Forms of Development Cooperation

There are various forms of international development cooperation. The forms have to do with how development cooperation is organized (procedures and processes) and who the actors/partners are. In international development circles, the terms North and South are used to refer to developed and developing countries respectively. This has been the case since the 1970s. This is based on the fact that all of the world's industrially developed countries (with the exception of Australia and New Zealand) lie to the north of developing countries (Blommaert *et al.*, 2009 and UNDP, 2004). The different forms of developing cooperation are: North-South Cooperation, South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation sometimes referred to as North-South-South Cooperation. For this study however, the focus is only on Triangular Cooperation.

Triangular Cooperation

According to a survey done by OECD in 2013, the United Nations' agencies and Japan were the most mentioned partners in Triangular Cooperation while China, Brazil and South Africa were mentioned as South-South Cooperation partners in this form of cooperation. Non-governmental actors like the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) were also mentioned as partners. Africa, Asia and Latin America had the most Triangular Cooperation partnerships which is in line with the view that this form of cooperation complements South-South cooperation. Further, according to the survey, this form of cooperation happens in multi-sector and cross-cutting areas like environment policy and rural development. The survey further indicated that most Triangular Cooperation participants are involved in joint development projects.

The reasons and motivations for taking part in a Triangular Cooperation are varied. In the case of educational partnerships or education lending, Steiner-Khamsi (2004) identified three reasons why international organizations lend to education models. First, they hope to show their constituents that their own projects are effective and desirable. Second, the cost of education transfer might in fact be relatively low given the division of labour in international organizations. And third, cookie-cutter programs developed at headquarters are generally easier to implement than custom-designed programs. The motivations for engaging in student exchanges between China and Africa for example are: China can use these exchanges to boost its political influence in Africa, and African countries can use them to challenge the colonial heritage within their education systems (Gillespie, 2001).

2.2.2: Triangular Cooperation in education partnerships

According to Dhillon (2013), cooperation is an associated term linked with partnership. Therefore, in this study, the two terms will be used inter-changeably and will look at the Triangular Cooperation initiatives as partnerships. Since the focus of the study is specifically Triangular Cooperation between education institutions in different nations, particular attention will be paid to education partnerships.

Different authors have different definitions of the term partnership. According to Skage (1996) a partnership is an undertaking to do something together, a relationship that consists of shared and/or compatible objectives and an acknowledged distribution of specific roles and responsibilities among participants. Waddell and Brown (1997) also describe a partnership as a wide range of inter-organizational collaborations where information and resources are shared and exchanged to produce outcomes that each partner would not achieve working alone. Fowler (1998) defines a partnership as a mutually enabling, inter-dependent interaction with shared intentions while Brinkerhoff (2002) defines it as a dynamic relationship among diverse actors, based on mutually agreed objectives, pursued through a shared understanding of the most rational division of labour based on the respective comparative advantages of each partner.

Kingsley and Waschak (2005) discuss four conceptualizations of partnerships. The first conceptualization is entity-based conceptualizations of partnership in which memberships, boundaries, and formal and informal organizing structures designed to achieve specific functions, play a major role. The second is partnerships as agreements where important elements include the delivery of agreed activities, projects or programs. Third conceptualization is process-based conceptualization of partnerships in which relationships are built up over time to enhance levels of trust and cooperation. This view resonates very closely with the partnership definition by Brinkerhoff (2002). Further, Kingsley and Waschak (2005) note that, under this view a great deal of attention is paid to patterns of communication between partners. Goal setting and activities are an integral part of the partnering process. The fourth and final perception is that of partnerships as a venue. However, this perception has been described as a seemingly unattainable ideal partnership consisting of “mutually collaborative arrangements between equal partners working to meet self-interests while solving common problems” (Sirotnik & Goodlad, 1988). The authors note that these conceptualizations are not mutually exclusive. When relating these conceptualizations to Triangular Cooperation principles and ideals, the conceptualization of partnerships as process and venue ring very true. However, with the view that conceptualizing partnerships as venue

is an unattainable ideal, the question is whether this holds true for the Triangular Cooperation education partnerships in practice.

There are various reasons/motivations for joining/forming a partnership. Barringer and Harrison (2000) present some theoretical approaches to explaining partnership emergence or formation along a conceptual continuum. In the transaction cost approach, a partnership will be formed if it promises to lower transaction costs for individual partners while under the resource dependency approach organizations enter into partnerships to gain access to resources or expertise that complements their capabilities and enables them to better achieve their goals. This implies that partnerships are formed for self-interests. The learning approach focuses on knowledge as the key competitive assets. Strategic approach focuses on problem solving where partnerships are formed with the view that they will increase the chances of dealing with a problem at hand. These partnerships are issue focused. The societal sector approach combines the learning and strategic approaches. Partners from different sectors come together to not only find solutions to problems, but also to learn from each other. The final approach entails multiple partnership arrangements and occurs over a longer time period. The Triangular Cooperation education partnerships may fall under the learning or strategic approaches. This is based on the principles of this form of cooperation including mutual learning, goals and objectives. However, the definite classification will be determined from the research findings. Kingsley and Waschak (2005) however contend that partnership formation is not so much driven but taken on as an opportunity and that needs do not really drive people to partner but, they partner with people with similar needs.

Partnerships go through various stages from the point of conception to their implementation. Triangular Cooperation partnerships are no different. Kingsley and O'Neil (2004) provide a partnership conceptual model that has three stages. In the first stage of Partnership Preconditions, there are two aspects: embeddedness and strategic needs. Embeddedness is the number and types of relationships that organizations have with one another prior to development of a partnership while strategic needs refer to the types of resources and legitimacy needs confronting organizations and whether there is a congruence or complementarity in these needs. The second stage referred to as Partnership Activities also has two aspects: partnership formation and partnership operation. Partnership formation covers the types of agreements regarding the goals, resource allocations, and responsibilities of each party while partnership operations are the actual behaviours in which the partners engage for example

partnership communication. The final stage of this model is on the Partnership Outcomes. The two aspects of this stage are: process outcomes and performance outcomes. Process outcomes refer to the qualitative and quantitative assessments that measure whether the partnership achieved the goals and duties of operation or not while performance outcomes refer to improvements in each partner's institution and transfer of knowledge between the partners among other performance outcomes.

2.2.3: Mutuality as a principle of Triangular Cooperation

When studying Triangular Cooperation, a critical aspect is to understand the principles behind this form of cooperation. These principles are the basis upon which the initiatives are formed. According to PPD (2010); Cabral and Weinstock (2010) and CAC/COSP (2011), the principles of South-South are: Respect for national sovereignty and ownership; Free from any conditionalities; Equality; Driven by South countries; Mutual respect and benefit; Partnership and solidarity. The principles of Triangular Cooperation are not very different from those of South-South Cooperation. They include ownership and engagement of beneficiary countries, alignment with local development priorities, mutual confidence among the partners and mutual responsibility (Fordelone, 2009).

The above principles should govern the establishment and implementation of any cooperation initiatives. Whether this happens in practice or not, is the question that this study is trying to answer. The focus though is on only one principle: mutuality and as mentioned, this is a critical success factor for Triangular Cooperation. Based on the research conducted by the Task Team on South-South Cooperation (2010) on boosting South-South Cooperation, the concept of mutuality is a recurrent issue. Some of the findings in the research indicated that in the case of Triangular Cooperation, mutual confidence is identified as a key factor for success.

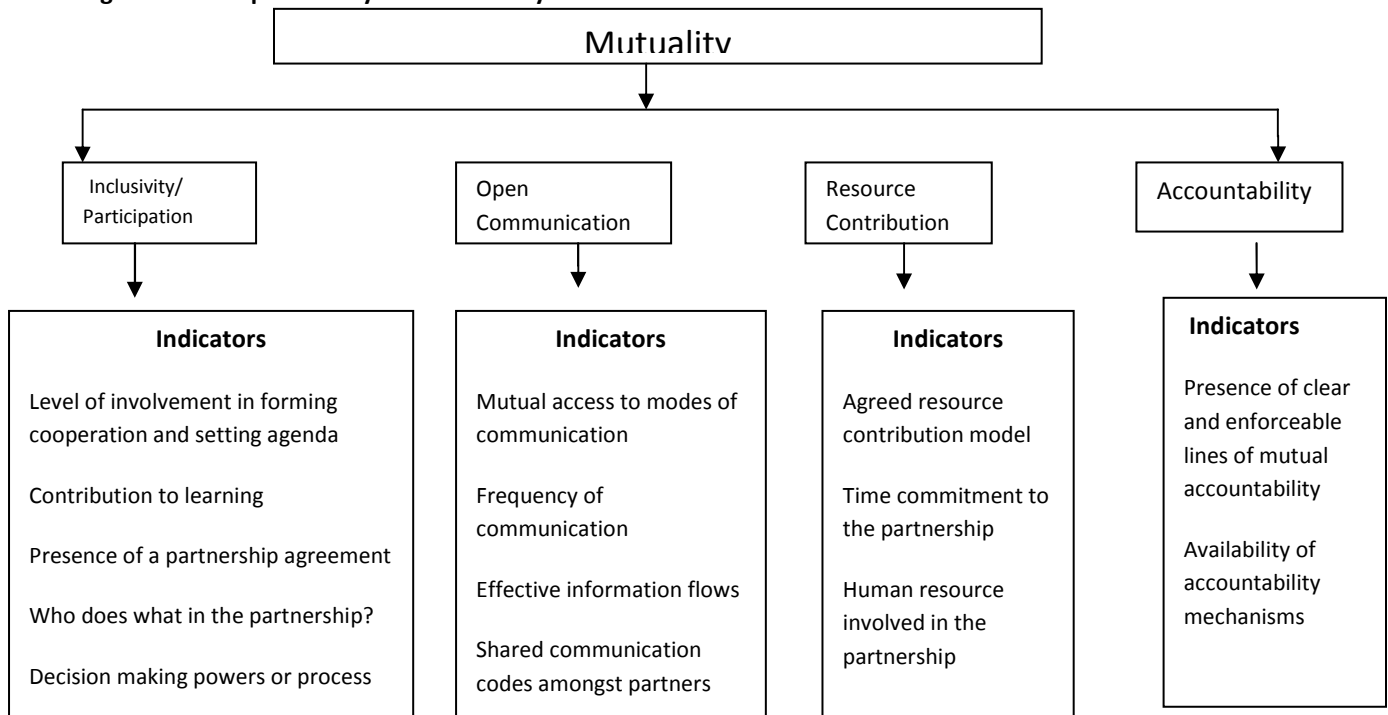
Mutuality is derived from the word mutual which can be used to describe a reciprocal relationship between two or more people or things. However, the word is also sometimes used to mean "shared in common." Mutuality is a reciprocal relation between interdependent entities (Oxford Dictionary). Mutuality can be seen as a way of achieving ideal partnerships as it makes a virtue of difference, enabling each partner to offer and gain something. A partnership based on mutuality is the ideal (Brinkerhoff, 2002 in Johnson and Wilson, 2006). The asymmetric nature of North-South relations did not give much room for mutuality. Thus, the importance of looking at Triangular Cooperation as a means of forging new and more equal relations based on mutuality between development partners. However, authors like Fowler (2000) as quoted in Johnson and Wilson (2006) argue that mutuality is not possible to achieve in

partnerships because of inequality and especially unequal power relations but in practice, partnerships lie in varying degrees between these two views. The extent to which a given partnership approaches the ideal or the sceptical¹ can be described as a mutuality gap. The question therefore becomes, to what extent is mutuality actually realized in the practice of Triangular Cooperation? And what is the mutuality gap in these forms of cooperation? And do the variations of mutuality affect the effectiveness of a partnership?

Available literature on the concept of mutuality in development cooperation is mostly based on North-South relationships. Two streams of thought are identified in regards to cooperation with the goal of learning from each other. One implies that learning of the North from the South is undervalued and insufficiently acknowledged. The second stream of thought implies that benefits of the North from the South are grossly overrated and exaggerated and 'the claim of mutuality may just be a token of appreciation to the Southern partner' (Bontenbal 2009). Is this situation unique to North-South cooperation or is it reflective of Triangular Cooperation initiatives as well? To be able to answer this question and others posed above, there is need to conceptualize and operationalize this term. Figure 2 is a conceptualization of this concept.

¹ Sceptical in this case refers to a view that assumes mutuality is not possible because of inequality, especially unequal power relations (Fowler, 2000; Harriss, 2000)

Figure 2: Conceptual analysis of Mutuality



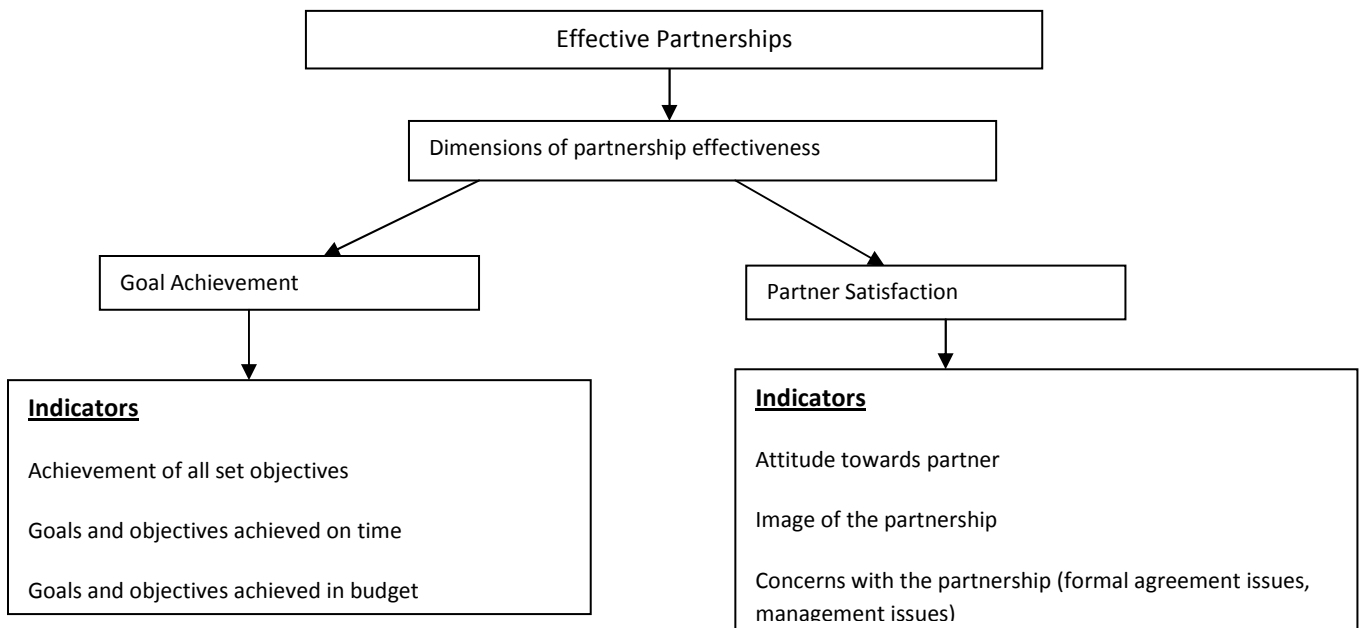
Source: Own Conceptualization

2.2.4: Effective partnerships

The dictionary definition of the term effectiveness is ‘successful in producing a desired or intended result’. Effective partnerships therefore strive at producing the pre-conceived desired result or outcome. Ashman (2001) also states that partnerships are defined as effective when they achieve their goals and satisfy partners or members and their major stakeholders. In understanding what constitutes effective partnerships, different authors have provided a number of elements or determinants of effective partnerships. They include: strong commitment and visible support from leaders, clearly defined and shared purpose, shared decision-making power among partners, appropriate well timed resources, and presence of a partnership champion, interpersonal relationships, strategic planning, sustainability and reciprocity. Effective and enduring educational partnerships entail the pursuit of mutually beneficial self-interests across all collaborating partners (Cunningham and Tedesco, 2001; Obst and Sutton, 2012; Kingsley and Waschak, 2005 and; Grobe, 1990). Goodlad (1994) too emphasized the importance of addressing the reciprocal interests of each partner organization as a necessary means to the development of a truly meaningful and enduring educational partnership. Other studies of partnerships in education, for example, Billet *et al.* (2007) have also found that building trust and trustworthiness are key principles and practices in effective partnership working.

Ashman (2001) identifies two dimensions of effectiveness upon which he bases his study on North-South partnerships. They are: goal achievement and partner satisfaction. He notes that ‘partnerships were considered effective to the extent that their formally stated goals had been achieved and that the partners expressed satisfaction with the achievements and the relationship.’ The indicators for the partner satisfaction dimension according to Strauss (1987) are: attitudes towards partners, images of the partnership and concerns with the partnership. These are the dimensions and indicators that will be used in this study in the analysis of partnership effectiveness. Figure 3 is a diagrammatical conceptualization of the effectiveness concept.

Figure 3: Conceptual analysis of effective partnerships



Source: Own Conceptualization

2.2.5: Link between mutuality and the effectiveness of education partnerships

To better understand this relationship, a short review of the elements of mutuality against the elements of effective partnerships is necessary. The mutuality elements are: inclusivity/participation, open communication, resources contribution and access and accountability.

Dhillon (2013) presents partnerships in a weak-strong partnership continuum with strong partnerships being the ideal. In line with the literature on mutuality discussed above, we can say that strong partnerships have high variations of mutuality. This is based on the overlapping defining characteristics

of both mutuality and strong partnerships. However, since mutuality is a normative principle/concept, in practice its realization is in varying degrees which can be reflected in this weak-strong partnership continuum. Viewing partnerships from this continuum brings to the fore the argument by Fowler (2000) that mutuality is not possible to achieve in partnerships because of inequality and especially unequal power relations but in practice, partnerships lie in varying degrees between these two views. The extent to which a given partnership approaches the ideal or the sceptical can be described as a 'mutuality gap'. The ideal in this case is a strong partnership that is mutual in practice while the sceptical is the weak partnership that is not mutual in practice.

On the issue of governance, Dhillon (2013) notes that the notion of weak and strong forms of partnership is also found by Briggs (2008, 2010) who distinguishes weakly collaborative from strongly collaborative partnerships and develops the conceptualisation of collaborative leadership, where the focus is on joint responsibility and accountability, as in partnerships, instead of on single-organisation leadership. Ferguson, *et al.* (2013) also adds that partnerships that involve shared power and responsibility are found to last longer and achieve more results. Kingsley and Waschak (2005) state that good communication is highly important in regard to partnership formation and that it is a measure of success in the venue conceptualization of partnerships. As noted, the Triangular Cooperation partnerships could fall under the venue and process partnership conceptualizations.

The type of relationship that is implied between the two concepts is such that the higher the mutuality of the partnership, the stronger the partnership and hence the more effective it is. Pfisterer (2013) also provides a partnership model depicting the relationship between mechanisms for developing mutuality in a partnership and the corresponding partnership practices. The model places mutuality at the centre of it. The mutuality mechanisms include: inclusiveness, interdependence, partnering identity, coordination flexibility, accountability, responsiveness, governance and transparency. The corresponding partnership practices are: joint project design, monitoring and evaluation, decision making, clarity of roles and frequent interaction. This model is almost similar to Cassidy (2007)'s model of effective partnership initiatives for education. The purpose of this study is to determine the viability of this relationship through studying the processes and interactions between partners in the Triangular Cooperation education partnership.

2.2.6: Theoretical framework

This study is an analysis of the nature of relationships between partners in a Triangular Cooperation partnership and the bearing of these relationships on the partnership's effectiveness and will be undertaken in the context of the Dependency approach. This theory will guide in the analysis of the nature of relationships under these two forms of development cooperation to ascertain to what extent mutuality has been achieved in practice.

From the dependency theory perspective, development cooperation among developing countries appears as an alternative to the status quo, an almost subversive strategy to strengthening developing countries both politically and economically (Jules and Silva, 2008). Bokhari (1989) also adds that, at a theoretical level, the strength of these Dependency ideas results from extending state-state relations to the wider arena of the global system. Instead of focusing on relations between two or more states, the Dependency approach extends to the nature of relations between states at a higher level of interaction. This theory becomes more important with their emphasis on the historical past of state-state relations as having a bearing on contemporary international relations. This consciousness can be directly applied to discourage developmental strategies that lack an appreciation of the special needs of Third World countries.

North-South Cooperation partnerships are considered asymmetrical in nature with the power tilting towards the North partner which thus questions the actual benefits of this partnership for those involved. At the international level, educational partnerships (involving schools) are supported by educational policy on global learning which largely promotes the partnership goals uncritically as being a 'good thing' yet there is also a growing body of literature problematizing such policies, showing that they can unwittingly lead to activities that are both exploitative and paternalistic (Hutchins and Smart, 2007; Martin and Griffiths, 2012). Further, according to Zemach-Bersin, (2007) the 'study abroad' phenomenon in the United States of America has been criticised for 'harvesting' resources and knowledge from Southern countries and using it to strengthen the country's political and cultural hegemony. These findings are in line with the views of the Dependency theorists.

South-South Cooperation partnerships are meant to correct this through the mutual nature of the relationships between the partners. The belief underlying these partnerships is the idea of working together effectively to create synergy. Mutuality refers to the idea of focusing on shared interests and goals of two or more partner organizations, while recognizing that they also have potentially differing

interests. Mutuality is created through the sort of institutional arrangements, policies and practices that are likely to promote the mutual benefit of the key partners (Guest and Peccei, 2001). It also encompasses such principles as jointly agreed purpose and values, mutual trust and respect, equal benefit from the relationship, mutual dependence of partner which entails respective rights and the responsibilities of each actor to others (Brinkerhoff, 2002).

This kind of partnership is the kind that Dependency theorists envisioned when they talked of 'radically different relations at higher levels of interaction' (Bokhari, 1989 and Crossley, 2000). This implies that the performance of partnerships and the accompanying projects are pegged on how mutual they are. Lack of mutuality in the partnership carries the danger of turning the well-meaning relationships into the more common 'paternalistic and exploitative' kind of relations between development partners. Mutuality in development cooperation thus is a determinant of the performance of partnerships and their projects. According to Zhao, (2002) partnership key performance indicators should focus on mutuality, which is crucial to their success. He further adds that performance measures for partnerships should highlight the key point of mutuality, such as mutual understanding through communications, mutual trust, mutual benefits, mutual evaluation and sharing.

2.2.7: Conceptual and analytical frameworks

The literature review brings out two distinct variables: mutuality (independent variable) and partnership effectiveness (dependent variable). Since the effectiveness of a partnership is dependent on different elements including the basic guiding principles, the study is seeking to understand the relationship between the variations in mutuality and the effectiveness of a partnership. The argument is that the variations of mutuality achieved in development cooperation, do in indeed affect the effectiveness of that partnership.

The analysis of the relationship between mutuality and partnership effectiveness will be based on the partnership model by Kingsley and O'Neil (2004) discussed above. Partnership effectiveness will be based on the two dimensions for use in analysis of partnerships by Strauss (1987). They are: achievement of formally stated goals and partners' satisfaction with the achievements and the relationships. The stages in partnership model should lead up to goal achievement and partner satisfaction. When this occurs, partnerships are considered effective. However, as partnerships go through these stages, they are also informed by variables like the partnership guiding principles like mutuality, equality and reciprocity; political, technical, organizational and cultural factors (Kwak, 2002).

These variables have a bearing on how effective partnerships are or not. Though they are important for a holistic understanding of partnership effectiveness, mutuality is the only focus for this study.

As discussed above, the principle of mutuality is a guiding principle which should be incorporated in the whole partnership model from its conception till its summation. The study will be seeking to determine the presence of the mutuality indicators and their influence on the effective partnerships. Mutuality in the first stage of Partnership Precondition brings out the question of motivation to form a partnership; what's in it for each partner? In the second stage, mutuality questions to what extent all partners are included and participate in the formation (agreements, goal setting, resource and responsibility allocation) while in the partnership operations, focus is on the nature of the relationship and behaviours while implementing the partnership; to what extent can these interactions be considered mutual? The final stage focuses on the partnership outcome and hence the realization of partnership goals and the benefits to each partner. Are all partners reporting on the same outcomes? The main question however, will be whether the variations in mutuality of the partnership under study have affected its effectiveness based on the two dimensions by Strauss (1987).

Diagrammatically, the analytical framework below demonstrates the linkages between the dependent concept (partnership effectiveness) and independent concept (mutuality). The study seeks to determine the nature of the relationship between the two concepts (whether positive or negative). Table 1 shows the linkages between the four mutuality elements and the four effective partnership element.

Table 1: Analytical Framework

| Mutuality Elements | Effective partnership Elements | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| | Achievement of set goals, on time and in budget | Attitude towards the partner | Images of the partnership | Concerns with the partnership |
| <p>inclusivity/ participation</p> <p>Inclusive negotiations of partnership agreements, agenda setting and role adjudication</p> | <p>How inclusive negotiation of formal agreement affected goal achievement</p> <p>How participation in agenda setting affected goal achievement</p> <p>How the adjudication of roles affected goal achievement</p> | <p>How inclusive negotiation of formal agreement affected attitude towards partner</p> <p>How participation in agenda setting affected attitude towards partner</p> <p>How the adjudication</p> | <p>How inclusive negotiation of formal agreement affected participants image of partnership</p> <p>How participation in agenda setting affected participants image of partnership</p> <p>How the adjudication of roles affected participants</p> | <p>How inclusive negotiation of formal agreement influenced concerns with the partnership</p> <p>How participation in agenda setting influenced concerns with the partnership</p> |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| | | of roles affected attitude towards partner | image of partnership | How role adjudication influenced concerns regarding the partnership |
| Coordination and Communication (frequency, modes, process of communication, mutual access to modes of communication) | How coordination and communication affected partnership goal achievement | How coordination and communication affected attitude towards partner | How coordination and communication affected partners' image of partnership | How coordination and communication influenced concerns regarding the partnership |
| Resources (Time, cash, HR) | How time set aside for partnership activities affected goal achievement How financial resources set aside for partnership affected goal achievement How the human resources involved in the partnership affected goal achievement | How time set aside for partnership activities affected attitude towards partner How financial resources set aside for partnership affected attitude towards partner How the human resources involved in the partnership affected attitude towards partner | How time set aside for partnership activities affected image of partnership How financial resources set aside for partnership affected image of partnership How the human resources involved in the partnership affected image of partnership | How time available for the partnership influenced concerns regarding the partnership How financial resources contribution influenced concerns regarding the partnership How the human resources available for the partnership influenced concerns regarding the partnership |
| Mutual accountability and transparency | How mutual accountability and transparency affected goal achievement | How mutual accountability and transparency affected attitude towards partner | How mutual accountability and transparency affected image of partnership | How mutual accountability and transparency influenced concerns regarding the partnership |

Source: Own Conceptualization

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

3.0: Introduction

This section describes the methodology that the research adopted for study. The methodology described was adopted because it helped answer the research questions. The section covers different elements such as the selection of the research design, the choice of appropriate study site, unit of analysis, case selection, data collection and analysis methods.

3.1: Research design

This was a purely qualitative research. This research studied one example of a Triangular Cooperation. This cooperation initiative was on-going and was older than one year, which was the minimum amount of time that the cooperation should have been on-going to qualify as a case study. Given that the purpose of the study was to analyse in some detail the concept of mutuality in practice. This research adopted a case study research design. A case study is a strategy of research that aims to understand social phenomena within a single or small number of naturally occurring settings (Bloor and Wood, 2006). According to Yin (1994) the purpose of a case study is to gain a detailed understanding of the processes involved within a setting and this can involve studying a single or multiple cases and numerous levels of analysis. In this study there was a close link between the research design (case study) and the qualitative nature of the research and data needs. This research was a single case study.

3.2: Description of study site

Though this was a single case study research project, there were three study sites. This is due to the fact that the study was looking at a Triangular Cooperation that involved three primary schools in three different countries. These three sites are the schools involved in the cooperation partnership and they are in: Lilongwe, Malawi and in Gweru, Zimbabwe and Fredrikstad, Norway. All these schools are found in urban areas.

The cooperation was launched in 2004 and has been running ever since. The cooperation is normally based on thematic projects with the latest one being on permaculture as a project with the main theme being climate change. Permaculture is a form of alternative sustainable agriculture.

3.3: Unit of analysis and case selection

The unit of analysis for this study was the Triangular Cooperation education partnership. The institutional focus areas of study were primary schools involved in a Triangular Cooperation. This allowed some control in the selected cases and ensured some degree of uniformity. The target respondents in the study were the leaders and committee members in the Triangular Cooperation partnership. The respondents were selected because they were heavily involved in the formation and implementation of the partnership and hence had the information needed for the study. Key informants who have expert knowledge on development cooperation and especially Triangular Cooperation were also interviewed.

The selection of the cases to be studied was based on Stake (1995) instrumental casework methodology where one or more cases are chosen from possible alternatives in order to explore a certain theme. The selection of the case study was very targeted and hugely based on the accessibility and availability of the respondents for study. This is because the partnership had the characteristics important to the study (purposive) and the respondents were readily available (convenience). The case that was studied is a Triangular Cooperation partnership involving: Bambino School (Malawi), St. Paul's Primary School (Zimbabwe) and Trosvik Skole (Norway).

3.4 Data sources and collection methods

Data sources and collection methods were based on the data needs for the research questions. According to Yin (2003a) there are six possible sources of evidence for case studies: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artefacts. In this study, there were secondary and primary data sources.

- I. Secondary data sources were from books and journal articles relating to the topic of study and the partnership agreement and reports from the partnership leaders. The review of books and journals was mainly to better understand the context issues while the partnership documents acted as support sources of information on the partnership.
- II. The primary data collection was through in-depth interviews for the partnership leaders and key informants and semi-structured questionnaires that were filled in by the committee members.
 - o The in-depth interviews were based on interview guides developed prior to the study. There were two different interview guides, one for the key informants and one for the

leaders of the partnership. For the key informant interview guides, three broad categories of questions were covered: the approach to the partnerships (formation, structure, actors and roles of partners), the mutuality of the partnership and its effectiveness. Questions for this group of respondents sought to answer questions of how Triangular Cooperation is practiced from the points of views of an academician, a government official and development cooperation professional.

- For the in-depth interviews with partnership leaders, the same three categories of questions mentioned above were covered. The perspective was however different from that of the key informants as the leaders were answering based on an actual existing partnership. These interviews were the main source of data for the research and hence were quite deep in depth and content. The interview guides are presented in Appendices 1 and 2 below.
- Semi-structured questionnaires (See Appendix 3) that were filled in by the partnership committee members were also used to collect more support data on the partnership. The data derived from these questionnaires had to do with the mutuality and effectiveness of the partnership according to the committee members and was to add onto the data provided by the leaders.

The reliance on interviews for the bulk of the data on the partnerships was due to its importance as a tool of collecting qualitative data. Yin (2003a) identifies this tool as an important source of case study information when he states that "most commonly, case study interviews are of an open-ended nature, in which you ask, key respondents about the facts of a matter as well as their opinions about events."

Apart from the actors in the partnership as respondents, the researcher also relied on key informants as sources of information. They were drawn from different organizations but all were familiar with development cooperation and specifically, Triangular Cooperation. The first key informant was Mr Francois Ekoko, the Africa head of the UN Office for South-South Cooperation. He works closely with the India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) cooperation and gave insight to the practice of Triangular Cooperation. Professor Winnie Mitula from the Institute for Development Studies who has done prior research on development cooperation between developing countries was the second key informant. She provided expert information from an academic point of view. Ms. Sabina Maghanga who is the

Director for the South-South Cooperation office in Kenya at the Ministry for Planning and Devolution was the third key informant. Her office is the focal point for South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Kenya and she has the mandate of coordinating and promoting South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the country. Ms. Maghanga provided information on Triangular Cooperation from the Government's perspective.

The respondents of this research study were therefore:

- a) Three key informants
- b) Three partnership leaders (one from each partner school)
- c) Six committee members (two from each partner school)

Table 2 summarizes the specific research questions and their data needs and corresponding data sources and data instruments that were used in this study to collect the research data.

Table 2: Data needs, sources and instruments summary

| Research question | Data needs | Data sources | Instruments |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p>Research Question 1.</p> <p>What are the characteristics of the Triangular Cooperation education partnership under study?</p> | Governance structure, type of projects and activities, type and number of participants | <p>Leaders of the partnership</p> <p>Key informants</p> | <p>Interview Guides: Appendices 2 and 3</p> |
| <p>Research Question 2.</p> <p>What indicators of mutuality are present in the Triangular Cooperation partnership?</p> | <p>Evidence of inclusivity</p> <p>Evidence of open communication processes and channels</p> <p>Presence of a resource use, contribution and access system for the partnership</p> <p>Mutual Accountability and transparency mechanisms</p> | <p>Partnership leaders, committee members, partnership reports, key informants</p> | <p>Interview Guides: Appendices 1 and 2</p> <p>Semi-structured questionnaire: Appendix 3</p> <p>Field notes: Appendix 4</p> |
| <p>Research Question 3.</p> <p>What are the differences in the nature of relationships between the partners in the Triangular Cooperation partnership being studied?</p> | <p>Nature of relationship between the two South schools, between the Norway and Malawi schools and between Norway and Zimbabwe school.</p> <p>Comparison of the findings</p> | <p>Partnership leaders, committee members, key informants</p> | <p>Interview Guides: Appendices 1 and 2</p> <p>Semi-structured questionnaire: Appendix 3</p> |
| <p>Research Question 4.</p> <p>To what extent can the Triangular Cooperation partnership under study be considered effective?</p> | <p>State of goal achievement</p> <p>Attitude towards partner</p> <p>Image/view of partnership</p> <p>Concerns with the partnership</p> | <p>partnership leaders, partnership committee members, key informants</p> | <p>Interview Guides: Appendices 1 and 2</p> <p>Semi-structured questionnaire: Appendix 3</p> |
| <p>Research Question 5.</p> <p>To what extent do the variations in mutuality influence the achievement of effective Triangular Cooperation education partnerships?</p> | <p>Influence on goal achievement</p> <p>Influence on attitudes towards partners</p> <p>Influence on the image of partnership</p> <p>Influence on concerns regarding the partnership</p> | <p>Partnership leaders, key informants,</p> | <p>Interview Guides: Appendices 1 and 2</p> |

Source: Own Conceptualization

3.5: Data analysis

According to Yin (2003a), data analysis involves examining, categorizing, tabulating, testing, or otherwise recombining both quantitative and qualitative evidence to address the initial propositions of a study. In qualitative research, this analysis focuses more on qualities than quantities. It seeks to draw out patterns and the extract meaning from rich, complex sources of linguistic (narrative) or visual (image) data (Suter, 2012). According to Coffey & Atkinson (1996), a basic principle of qualitative research is that data analysis should be conducted simultaneously with data collection. This allows you to progressively focus your interviews and observations, and to decide how to test your emerging conclusions. This is a principle that was put into practice in this research project.

The purpose of this research was to determine the relationship between mutuality and partnership effectiveness. However, since the research was qualitative, causality was understood to be in terms of processes and mechanisms in the partnership rather than simply demonstrating regularities in the relationship between the variables (Maxwell, 2009). The data collected was analysed using content analysis techniques. The actual data analysis process adopted the three strategies for qualitative analysis as discussed by Maxwell (2009). They were:

- a) Categorizing strategies (such as coding and thematic analysis),
- b) Connecting strategies (such as narrative analysis and individual case studies), and;
- c) Memos and displays

The author notes that these strategies can and should be combined and hence their application in this research. This analysis process did indeed combine these strategies as discussed below.

According to Maxwell (2009), categorization facilitates comparison between things in the same category and between categories. Such categorizing makes it much easier for you to develop a general understanding of what is going on, to generate themes and theoretical concepts and to organize and retrieve your data to test and support these general ideas. In the data analysis for this research, the researcher first turned the interview texts into tables, and then created a code for each question in the data collection tools (interview guides and semi-structured questionnaire questions). Questions and their codes fell under one of the three main data categories that were: approach to partnership, mutuality of partnership and effectiveness of the partnership. Since there were three different

categories of respondents, (key informants, partnership leaders and committee members), the researcher had for each data category, three sets of data. This was the first stage of the analysis which also adopted the first strategy of qualitative data analysis.

Maxwell (2009) adds that the connecting strategies attempt to understand the data, an interview transcript or other textual material in context, using various methods to identify the relationships among the different elements of the text. The strategies look for relationships that connect statements and events within a particular context into a coherent whole. After the coding and categorization of the data, the researcher adopted this second analysis strategy as well. Using this strategy, the researcher did a narrative of the findings based on the research questions and the categorized findings. This narrative was also based on the responses from the three respondent categories and hence allowed the researcher to compare and contrast what the different respondents had to say on more or less the same issues.

When it came to bringing together the data categories and especially the data on mutuality and partnership effectiveness, the researcher found that using tables and matrices as memos and displays was quite useful as they brought out the relationships between the data categories. The use of memos and displays is the third data analysis strategy discussed by Maxwell (2009). Displays and memos facilitate the researcher's thinking about relationships in the data and make their ideas and analyses visible and retrievable. Memos should be written frequently during the whole analysis process. Miles & Huberman (1994) note that displays which include matrices or tables, networks or concept maps, serve the purpose of data reduction and the presentation of data or analysis in a form that allows one to see it as a whole. An example of the matrix figure for this research is Figure 6 discussed in Chapter 4. This relationship between mutuality and the effectiveness of a partnership was the crust of this research.

3.6: Validity

Some of the threats to validity in qualitative research are bias and reactivity. According to Maxwell (2009), biases are the ways in which data collection or analyses are distorted by the researcher's theory, values, or preconceptions. Reactivity on the other hand is the influence of the researcher on the research outcomes. The issue of validity in qualitative research is different from that in quantitative research. In qualitative research, validity is often referred to as trustworthiness or credibility (Suter, 2012). Zucker (2009) also points out that traditional criteria of internal and external validity are replaced by such terms as trustworthiness and authenticity in qualitative research. Credibility or authenticity aim

to answer the questions do the findings of the study make sense? Are they credible to the respondents and readers of the research report?

According to Suter (2012), some of the common methods of assessing validity include consistency checks, use of independent coders to sample raw data and create codes or categories so that the consistency of data reduction methods can be assessed and the use of stakeholder checks. This refers to the use of research participants/ informants who generated the raw data to evaluate the interpretations and explanation pulled from the data.

For this research, the researcher after transcribing the interviews sent these transcriptions to one key informant and one partnership leader via email for quick reviews. These transcriptions were however for their own interviews only. The purpose of doing this was to ascertain that in the least, the researcher had captured the essence of the interviews with some of the respondents. Had an issue been raised by these two respondents, the researcher would have done validity checks for all respondents. This was however not the case. To ensure reliability of the data collected, the researcher had two records of the responses, a tape recorder that was used with the agreement of the respondents and interview notes that she wrote down. These two recordings were used during the transcription. The researcher was affiliated with the funding organization mentioned in this study. To minimise bias therefore, the researcher chose a partnership that she was least familiar with and also made the decision from the beginning, not to include the funding organization as a source of information or data. The reliance on only information provided by those in the partnership and the declaration of this study as a purely academic research to the respondents from the onset of data collection was an attempt to minimise potential bias.

3.7: Limitations of the study

One of the limitations to this study was that with the school partnership under study being part of a wider network of five schools in each country, the researcher felt that they were quite intertwined and the study could have benefited from inclusion of all these fifteen schools for a more conclusive analysis of the partnership. This was however not possible due to the limited scope of the study. Such a study could however be undertaken in the future.

Chapter 4: Research Findings and Analysis

4.0: Introduction

This chapter presents the primary data research findings drawn from the in-depth interviews conducted with three key informants, three partnership leaders and six partnership committee members. The findings were also based on analysis of partnership documents like reports using a field notes guide. This chapter is divided into five sub-topics as guided by the research questions. The sub-topics explore the characteristics of the Triangular Cooperation under study, the indicators of mutuality present in the Triangular Cooperation, the nature of relationships among the partners, the effectiveness of this Triangular Cooperation and finally, the link between the two concepts of mutuality and partnership effectiveness under study through an analysis of how the mutuality elements present (or not), influence the effectiveness of the Triangular Cooperation.

4.1: Characteristics of the Triangular Cooperation education partnership under study

This research sought to understand the influence of mutuality on the effectiveness of a partnership through an analysis of a specific Triangular Cooperation case study. The researcher thus had to first review the specific partnership to enable the investigation of the principle of mutuality and also its effectiveness. This was a review of who is involved in the partnership (actors), the formation process of this partnership, whether the partnership is based on a formal agreement and the different motivations of the partners for being involved. The basic question being answered here is who and what constitutes this partnership. This partnership is made of three schools found in Malawi, Zimbabwe and Norway. The funding organization is a Norwegian Non-Governmental Organization. All three partners were present from the onset of the partnership. The donor partner is the Norwegian school which is in line with the OECD list of donor countries. However, the identity of the pivotal partner in this partnership was not so clear to the researcher and may imply that there is no pivotal partner, just two beneficiary partners. The Triangular Cooperation partnership model may thus include Donor-Beneficiary-Beneficiary partners only instead of the traditional Donor-Pivotal-Beneficiary partners. The Malawi school could fit the identity of the pivotal partner more easily than the school in Zimbabwe. Below is the discussion on the findings of the specific aspects that characterize Triangular Cooperation.

4.1.1: Partnership formation process and the actors in the Triangular Cooperation

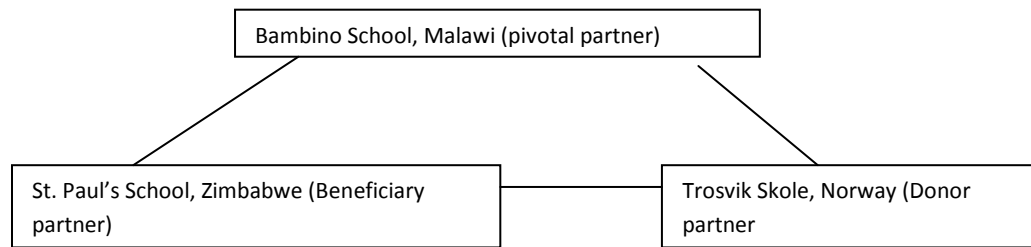
Development cooperation involves the coming together of any two or more actors in order to change the living conditions of vulnerable groups in society. Triangular Cooperation is named thus due to the number of actors involved in cooperation. However, these actors also play different roles in the partnership. In explanation of the partnership formation process and actors involved, partnership leader one had this to say,

'This school partnership was started in 2004 by a Norwegian. He was the coordinator of two North-South partnerships involving Malawi, Zimbabwe and Norway schools. The Malawi-Norway partnership was under the Fredskorpset Norway Municipal International Cooperation Programme while the Zimbabwe-Norway partnership was under the Vennskap Nord/Sor cultural exchange programme. Under the two partnerships, five schools were involved in each country and hence the linking of a school with two schools from the other two participating countries to form a partnership. This system has continued to date.'

For purposes of a more focused research, the researcher decided to select only one specific partnership involving Bambino school in Malawi, St. Paul's Primary School in Zimbabwe and Trosvik Skole in Norway. This is despite the fact that this partnership is a network of five schools in each of the three countries. The findings are thus from respondents from these three schools.

Based on definitions of Triangular Cooperation where the actors include a donor, pivotal and beneficiary partners and the point of triangular initiation, a model for this Triangular Cooperation can be derived. OECD (2013) provides four models of this form of cooperation based on the point of partnership initiation. According to the explanation provided in the excerpt above, this partnership adopts the model which has the triangular agreement as the starting point. It involves the three partners coming into an agreement from the onset of the cooperation. They identify, negotiate, formulate and implement the activity. Figure 4 is a diagrammatical representation of this partnership.

Figure 4: Diagrammatical representation of the Norway-Malawi- Zimbabwe partnership



Source: Based on OECD (2013) fourth model of Triangular Cooperation

Geographically, Malawi and Zimbabwe are located in Southern Africa while Norway is located in Northern Europe. The geographic locations and previous partnership relationships between the partner countries also fit with two general characteristics of Triangular Cooperation according to Ashoff (2010) that normally, the emerging donors and beneficiary countries are mostly located in the same region and Triangular Cooperation is often based on previous cooperation between traditional and emerging donors.

When asked what their understanding of Triangular Cooperation was, the three key informants had these responses:

'Triangular Cooperation is a mutually beneficial partnership free of any conditionalities', (Key informant three)

'Triangular Cooperation is about power dynamics; the North wants to work with the South. They feel that they owe it to the South partners to work in partnerships for development. That is why very few partnerships are initiated by the South.' (Key informant two)

'Triangular Cooperation involves three parties that have distinct roles: the donor partner that provides the financial resources, supporting pole/ pivotal country is usually a developing country/partner with financial resources and high technical knowledge and a beneficiary partner or partners that are the target for the financial and technical assistance.' (Key informant one)

To examine whether these views by the key informants apply to this partnership or not, further analysis of the independent variable was necessary. However, the view by key informant one on the involvement of three parties applies to this partnership at least. There are three actors in this partnership. They are,

Bambino School in Malawi, St. Paul's Primary School, Zimbabwe and Trosvik Skiole in Norway. On the roles of the different partners, leader one noted that:

'The Norway partner's role is to mediate or act as link for the two South partners to the funding organization while their school's role is to implement the projects at the school level , exchange skills and knowledge mostly with our South partner and report on the project implementation.'

This was supported by leaders two and three, though leader three also noted that their school is also a project implementing partner as well as a funding partner in collaboration with the funding organization. This role description makes clearer the identity that each partner takes up in this partner or in the least, the identity of the donor partner who it seems is the Norwegian partner.

According to information gathered from the three leaders, the main precondition during the formation of the partnership was that participating schools had to have been part of the previous North-South partnerships. The schools then had to make an official application to the funding organization as potential partners. This was however solely done by the Norwegian coordinator. Leader two notes that,

'A lot of things were done in Norway and our school had the role of signing the documents and that even though I was a deputy head teacher then, I was not involved in the partnership formation process.'

The implication of this was that there was barely any kind of participation for the South schools at the time of partnership initiation. According to the partnership leaders from the South schools, this has however changed over time. Partnership leaders one notes that,

'Decision making-wise, we are more involved. Previously, we got instructions from our Norwegian partners and planning meetings were never held jointly but since 2010, things have changed for the better. Prior to this, we were not involved in any planning and hence even evaluation of the project's success was quite hard. This was especially hard when the funding organization asked for reports on the project. But we did not fully understand what we were supposed to have achieved so our reports were substandard.'

Leader two adds that,

'We now have a stronger relationship with our South partner and our relationship with the Norway partner has been weakening'

This is a point the researcher also noted and by the end of the data collection the researcher was of the impression that the Northern partner was being edged out as the two South partners grew closer and a possible future scenario would be the establishment of a purely South-South partnership between the Malawi and Zimbabwe schools. The researcher also found it interesting that in the description of the partnership formation process, partnership leader three used the phrase *'we saw the possibility of exchanging students between the three countries'* implying inclusivity. However, when the same question is posed to the other two leaders, both gave a similar account of the partnership formation process where they note that, *'it was started by the Norwegian coordinator who also drafted the agreement and application to the funding organization.'*

4.1.2: Formal partnership agreement and partner motivations

On the issue of formal agreements among the partners, the key informants were of the opinion that though they are necessary and important for an effective and mutual partnership, their presence is not always guaranteed and that some partnerships exist without a formal structured agreement. Key informant one specifically noted that:

'Partnerships should be guided by such agreements according to on-paper guidelines. However this is not always the case. Agreements are there but they are not always well formulated or fully understood by all partners. The partner that is in charge of initiating the partnership most times also comes up with the agreement for the other parties to sign.'

This statement proved to be quite true for the partnership under study. Though there is a partnership agreement that was signed by partners from the three countries, it was drafted by the Norwegian partner and given to the South partners to sign. The Norwegian partner did initiate this partnership. This is according to a statement from partnership leader one who stated that:

'Yes, we have an agreement that was already made by the Norwegians so all we had to do was sign. This agreement was in place until 2008 when we went to South Africa for a meeting of all institutions that work with Norwegian organizations where this system was highly criticized.'

The leader goes further and notes that in the partnership agreement, the Norway school is identified as the primary partner while the South schools are identified as secondary partners.

However, even with the presence of a formal agreement guiding the partnership, these partnerships are an amalgamation of personal agendas and motivations. The hope is that each partner 'gets something' from the partnership. Key informant one states that there is no one motivation for all the actors and that:

'The different partners have different motivations. The pivotal countries usually want to complement/increase/ improve their delivery capacity while the beneficiary countries usually have more basic needs than both pivotal and donor partners.'

The key informants then provided a list of possible motivations that different actors have for joining a triangular partnership and they include:

- a) *Mobilization of resources for development and this applies mostly to the pivotal and beneficiary partners,*
- b) *Complementation of the more common North-South development partnerships,*
- c) *As a tool of reducing hostilities among partner nations for the sake of development,*
- d) *Increasing trade among the countries involved and finally,*
- e) *Because of globalization where countries are relying on each other more and more.*

When queried regarding their reasons and motivations for their school's joining the partnership, this is what the leaders had to say. Leader one mentioned the motivations or reasons for joining the partnership as being:

'Cultural exchange, exchange of pedagogical skills and methods and environmental conservation through permaculture practice'

Leader two named the motivations of,

'Re-greening the school environment, develop self-reliance among learners and learn and practice sustainable land use practices at school and at home.'

Leader three named the motivations of,

'Water conservation, intercultural competence among its students through the exchange and to enable the learners to understand the interconnectedness of the world so as to enable them think globally but act locally.'

These findings show that the motivations vary from one partner to the next. The researcher however noticed that the motivations among the South schools were quite similar. The various motivations also pointed at the goals of the specific themes that the partnership was pursuing with a few being more general. The theme-specific motivations included cultural exchange, environmental conservation through permaculture practice, water conservation and the need to gain knowledge and skills on sustainable land use. The more general motivations had to do with exchange of pedagogical skills and developing self-reliance in learners through the partnership. These responses provided by the partnership leaders though not as elaborate as those given by the key informants, may be categorized under the motivations of mobilizing resources for development (for the two South countries) and also motivated by globalization. The point on complementing the North-South partnership can be seen in this partnership under study since it grew from two distinct North-South partnerships, Norway-Zimbabwe and Norway- Malawi. Further analysis of the motivations of joining the partnership shows that the partners were motivated by opportunities of learning from each other and solving some problems in each of their school.

4.1.3: Partnership activities

Another defining characteristic of a partnership is the activities undertaken as part of its mandate. Below are the activities that were mentioned by the three partnership leaders as being the partnership activities:

- i. Teacher and student exchanges to all three countries,*
- ii. Formation of clubs in each school to help in project implementation and in the case of the permaculture project, permaculture clubs were created,*
- iii. Permaculture activities like creation of small man-made forests in the schools,*
- iv. Malawi and Zimbabwe schools jointly wrote a syllabus guide document on climate change that is being used by schools in the two countries and;*

v. *Holding an open day on climate change in Malawi.*

The Norway partner school's main focus was responsible water use instead of the gardening aspect of permaculture. This is because for this school, water wastage is a bigger challenge than bare school grounds as is the case in the South. That Zimbabwe and Malawi schools worked on a syllabus text is further evidence of their growing partnership that excludes the Norway partner. As partnership leader two noted, '*in 2013 we jointly wrote a water and climate change syllabus with our partner schools in Malawi*'.

In summary, this partnership was started in 2004 with all three partner schools (Bambino School, St. Paul's Primary School and Trosvik Skole) present from the onset. There is a formal agreement signed by all partners that was drafted by the Norwegian coordinator. The three schools are all project implementing partners with the Norway school being a funding partner as well. One of the changes that have occurred over time in the partnership is the growing relationship between the two South schools. The motivations for joining the partnership by the three schools were: cultural exchange, exchange of pedagogical skills, re-greening the school environment, gain knowledge and skill on permaculture and environmental conservation. The motivations however varied among the partners. As expected in partnership, there are identifiable activities undertaken in this partnership, including among others, teacher and student exchange, permaculture activities in the two South schools and formation of clubs at school level to implement the partnership.

4.2: Mutuality elements present in the Triangular Cooperation partnership under study

4.2.1: Understanding mutuality

Mutuality appears to be very important in partnerships, but also quite hard to achieve. In theory, when a partnership is mutual, then it is effective but in practice, it is dependent on one's conceptualization of effectiveness. As earlier noted, mutuality in partnerships has been described loosely as the realization of a win-win situation for all the parties involved. It is a reciprocal relationship between two or more people or things and a partnership based on mutuality is considered the ideal according to different authors. This study sought to find out whether the Malawi-Zimbabwe-Norway partnership is mutual or not or more importantly to what extent the partnership can be considered mutual. The importance of analysing the extent of mutuality realization is to assess the extent to which it has been achieved in the

partnership. As we have seen some authors like Fowler (2000) do not agree that mutuality in its totality can be achieved but its realization in a partnership lies in varying degrees between the ideal (fully mutual) and sceptical (not mutual at all). For this purpose, the elements of mutuality as highlighted in Figure 2 were communication and coordination, resource contribution and access, mutual accountability and participation and inclusion. Questions were asked regarding each of these indicators of mutuality. The following four subheadings discuss the findings on each of the indicators mentioned.

According to the key informants, mutuality is very important in a partnership of this nature but, it is also very hard to realize. Key informant two adds that for the realization of mutuality,

'Partners need to share a vision and mission or share something else that holds them together.'

However, key informant one summarized the issue of importance of mutuality in partnerships in one statement,

'As a researcher and dreamer, mutuality is very important. As a realist, it is not necessary. What matters to the beneficiary partner is the achievement of set benefits. The same goes for the donor and pivotal partners. Most focus in partnerships is on the results rather than the processes involved in achieving the results. When the processes start interfering with the achievement of results, then a review is necessary. The levels of participation and inclusivity are never the same and accountability is almost always unidirectional. Better communication and coordination aspects are what partnership stakeholders focus on when there are problems in achieving the desired results.'

The key informants were also asked how they would rank the four indicators of mutuality on the basis of importance in a partnership. Key informant three stated that,

'All are equally important and without one, the partnership would not be genuine.'

Here the respondent introduced the idea of a genuine partnership as the ideal and what partners should strive for. Key informant two notes that the issue of resources is quite central to a partnership though it is linked to the indicators of mutual accountability and communication and coordination. She further notes that *'accountability is however the burden of the receiving partners'*, something that is reiterated by key informant one and confirmed by the partnership members and leaders. Key informant one was however of the opinion that ranking these indicators in terms of their importance is not

necessary. Each partner would value these indicators differently. The importance of each indicator would be determined by the personal needs and motivations of each partner. This is according to his answer to this question that stated:

'The answer to this is that it depends on the needs of each partner or perceived gains of each partner.'

When asked whether the realization of these indicators means that the partnership is effective, the key respondents had varying views. Key informant two and three agrees with this statement. However, key informant one notes that this can only happen if the goal of the partnership is the achievement of a genuine partnership. Key informant one maintains the same philosophy that he has had so far when answering this question. He stated that:

'Yes, that is the assumption in theory, but in practice, it depends on one's understanding of effective partnership and if maybe the achievement of goals is the main objective of the partnership, then whether the goals are achieved in a manner depicting all these aspects or not, a partnership will still be considered effective if all goals are met.'

Below is a presentation of the findings on the four indicators of mutuality based on the Triangular Cooperation partnership under study.

4.2.2: Nature of participation and inclusivity of different partners in the Triangular Cooperation

Participation and inclusion of all partners in all aspects of the partnership is an important element of mutuality. This has to do with the levels of participation and inclusion for each partner. The levels of participation and inclusion in this partnership are skewed towards the North partner. There has been some improvement over the years but the levels are still low for the two South schools. However, there is lack of agreement on the feasibility and necessity of equality in participation and inclusivity among key informants. These overall statements are based on responses from all three categories of respondents as discussed below.

In analysing the data on this particular element, a statement by key informant two captures the essence of this indicator when she says that,

'There is a lot of romanticism around participation and inclusivity and society does not run like that and It is also important to note that the weaker you are as a partner the weaker your inclusivity and participation in the partnership.'

Participation and inclusivity indicator has to do with the level of involvement of the different partners in the formation and implementation of the partnership. In a mutual partnership, inclusion and participation levels are high from the onset of the partnership. These research findings show that the initiation of this partnership was done by an individual from one of the partner schools with the other two partners playing a very minimal and passive role. This is according to the partnership leaders, one and two who individually stated that,

'I was involved in the discussions only and these discussions resulted in a signed agreement that was formulated by the coordinator from Norway' (Partnership leader one)

'I was not involved in this process but our school signed the agreement' (Partnership leader two)

When queried regarding their input in the implementation of the partnership, leader one states that,

'Yes I do have a say in how things are done but mostly among the schools in my country as I am the country coordinator as well. The other partners also do things their own way. When it comes to group decisions, the funding organization and the Norwegian partners mostly have more say.'

A similar response was given by leader two. All the three leaders are also country coordinators for this partnership and they all gave the indication that as country coordinators, they have the most say in regards to the partnership in their country. Leader three was however of the opinion that decision making and agenda setting is inclusive of all three partners through discussions when he stated that

'Decisions on this partnership are arrived at through consultative meetings and emails among the three partners.'

However, the committee members from partners one and two raised a concern regarding their exclusion from any form of decision making. When asked whether they are involved in the decision making process of the partnership, they both answered 'no'. They stated that this *'decisions are made by our head teachers who then tell us what has been discussed and decided.'* This role is confirmed by the partnership leaders when they explained the process of decision making and agenda setting. Leader one explains that

'We as head teachers in my country meet frequently to discuss the partnership and so when it comes to decisions regarding the partnership in here, we discuss and plan. When it involves agendas with all three partners we most of the times meet with the head teachers from our South partner country or send the coordinator as representative of our country groups to such meetings. In most cases, our partner from the North travels to either of the two South countries and in some cases, we meet in Norway to set the agenda.'

Leader three confirms this process and adds that, *'If meetings are not possible, we discuss matters on email or via Skype.'*

However, even though this process seems inclusive, leader one notes that, *'The Norway partner still has more say in regard to agenda setting since they are richer and also, the funding organization's policy limits how far each partner goes.'*

As key informant two is quoted above saying that in a partnership, weaker partners have weaker participation and inclusivity, we could base our judgment of this indicator on this statement and the research findings. The conclusion may be that the two South partners are weaker in comparison to the Norway partner. This weakness can be observed in their low level of involvement in the formation of the partnership and their lesser decision making power in regard to partnership matters. Partnership leader one does note that the Norway partner has a stronger voice in the partnership especially when it comes to making decisions regarding all three partners.

4.2.3: Communication and coordination in the partnership

The communication and coordination indicator was not discussed with the key informants. It was however a key point in the interviews with the partnership leaders and committee members. Questions on this had to do with issues of mode and frequency of communication and the nature of these communication practices i.e. who communicates with who more and who on average initiates these conversations. Understanding these communication practices is critical as it is core in understanding the relationships among partners and how things are run in the partnerships. On analysis of the raw data, it emerged that the communication in this partnership is neither sound nor effective. The importance of this element to the partnership was highlighted in the fact that its infrequency and challenges associated with it were highlighted as concerns regarding the partnership. It is heavily dependent on internet enable computers which though readily available to the North school, the schools in the South

find it a challenge in terms of access and cost. The findings also show that most communication regarding the three partners is initiated by the North partner.

To better bring out these points, responses from the respondents were as follows. Leader one made a comment on how things were prior to 2010 in the partners which can be used to highlight the importance of communication in a partnership. He states that,

'Prior to 2010, there was little effectiveness of the partnership since us in the South lacked some information.'

All respondents answered in the affirmative to the question on the presence of a communication coordinator by stating that, *'yes, we have a communication coordinator'*. In two of the partner schools, the overall coordinator is also the communication coordinator. The communication coordinator serves all the schools in each country. Access to computers and internet access was the main determinant of who would be the communications coordinator as leaders one and two state,

'I do this since our school has the means through internet enabled computers and I am also the country coordinator for the project.' (Partnership leader two) and;

'In our country, it is the head teacher of the only school that has access to internet connection and computers.' (Partner leader one)

These statements indicate that internet enabled computers play a central role in the communication practices of the partnership and highlight the importance of access to the modes of communication mostly relied on in this partnership. All three partnership leaders stated that emails and Skype are the most common modes of communication with leader one saying for example, *'emails for written documents and mostly to the Northern partner since it is expensive to call or send short messages'* when answering this question. He also adds that, *'with our South partners, phone calls and short messages are more convenient and they also allow other members of the committee to forge personal relationships with the other committee members from this partner school apart from the coordinator.'* Leader three also adds that, *'we talk on email and Skype very frequently with the leader from the school in Malawi. It is also sometimes hard to get the Zimbabwe leader as frequently as we would like to.'*

The reliance on the internet for communication and the challenges that partner schools one and two face in accessing it may explain why there is little interaction with the North partner and hence it came

up as a partnership concern as will be discussed below. Inter-partner communication is mostly by and through the partnership leaders who then update the rest of the committee as a committee member from partner two states, *'we get updates on our partners from our head teacher.'* On the frequency of communication between the partners, leader two indicates that it occurs, *'frequently especially when there is something new that we want to do or when we are planning visits to each other.'* Leader three agrees with this when he says that, *'communication between partners is frequent'* while leader one alludes to a more structured process when he says the *'it takes place every three months or so.'* Leaders one and three both agree that they communicate more often with each other than with partner two. Partner two, on the other hand states that, *'the partner we communicate with most often is partner one.'* Leader one explains the more frequent communication with leader three as, *'because there is easy access of internet on both sides.'* This also explains the issue of information access from the partners with both leaders one and three indicating that it is a challenge getting information from partner two. Leader one summarizes this when he says:

'We have never had a problem with Norway as a partner. However, it has been a challenge when dealing with our Zimbabwe partners since they don't have easy access to internet.'

However, leader two provides a contrary response when this same question is posed when he states that, *'the communication from Norway is a little limited though we get regular updates from our partners in Malawi.'*

In understanding the communication practices of this partnership, the researcher sought to find out which partner on average initiates communication. Leader two notes that, *'It depends on the purpose of the communication. Any one of the partners can initiate the communication'*, a view that is supported by the leader three. However, leader one states that to the contrary,

'If it has something to do with the Malawi schools, the coordinator decides on what is to be communicated and when. The Norway partner, on the other hand, initiates communication on matters relating to the three countries in partnership.'

This communication system as is an indication of how things are run and the different relationships among the partners. The North partner still seems to hold more power even in terms of communication and coordination if we are to go by the views of leader two and the fact that the mode of communication most relied on is readily available to them. The more frequent communication between

the leaders in partner schools one and three also shows that this indicator has a bearing on the relationships between partners and hence their mutuality.

4.2.4: Resource use and contribution

Resource use and contribution as an element of mutuality did not fair very strongly in terms of influencing the processes of the partnerships compared to the other two elements. Findings showed that their main issue is not who contributes what, but the sufficiency of the resources for the partnership. The element sought to examine who contributes what to the partnership and access and use of the resources available in the implementation of the partnership.

It was thus examined through the eyes of the key informants. The findings show radically different views with key informants one and two indicating that 'yes', resource contribution and access do have a bearing on the mutuality of a partnership. The main reason behind this according to key informant one is that, *'the provider of financial resources yields the most power while the beneficiary partner yields the least power and this has a bearing on the relationships between the partners.'* On the other end, Key informant three does not agree with the idea that this indicator of mutuality has a bearing on the partnership. She states that,

'Resource contribution systems do not necessarily have a bearing on the partnership since resource contribution is rarely equal. It could even be as unequal as 95% to 5%. However, in genuine partnerships, this should not matter since they are based on mutual respect and friendship. The traditional North-South partnerships took (and still takes) the form of master-slave relationship. This is where the resource contribution equation affected how the partnership was/is run.'

When questioned on the issue of resources and whether there is a resource contribution and sharing agreement, partnership leader one states that,

'Yes there is such an agreement but it is based on the funding organization's policy document which was provided during the formation of the partnership. This document is part of the main agreement and stipulates what is expected of each partner in terms of responsibility and contribution.'

It also emerges that the partner that contributes most resources is the Norwegian partner. These funds are used to cover half of the exchange travel budget to the partner countries according to the partnership agreement document that the researcher also analyzed and information from all three leaders. The committee members from partner schools one and two also confirm that they receive material gifts from the Northern partner. Leaders one and two and their corresponding committee members listed their schools' contributions to this partnership. These contributions were in-kind rather than monetary and they included: *'farm input for the permaculture project like seeds, fertilizers and manure, water, labour and ideas and knowledge sharing'*. The two leaders (one and two) also add that *'we do not contribute any money to this partnership.'*

When queried whether this system of resource contribution is satisfactory, all three leaders answered *'yes.'* The reason for this was similar with leader three stating that, *'our partner schools are not in a position to contribute any money to this partnership and even the funding organization understands this.'* In terms of time as a resource, leader one notes that, *'our partner from Zimbabwe could improve on this and commit more time to the partnership.'*

The researcher noticed that the partners' relationship did not seem to be influenced or informed by the issue of resources. The economic realities of the partners are recognized and accepted and hence seem to be a non-issue. However the fact that the Norway partner has a stronger voice than the other two partners as was pointed out by leader one when he stated that, *'The Norway partner still has more say in regard to agenda setting'*, may be an indication that resource contribution and especially monetary resources really do have a bearing on the mutuality of relationships. The more power accorded to the Norway partner may be due to how much resources they actually contributed compared to the other two partners. This was however supported by the findings of the study and may require further research to make comprehensive conclusions.

4.2.5: Mutual accountability in the Triangular Cooperation

The mutual accountability element yielded some sort of consensus in terms of views among the key informants. Mutual accountability is when partners agree to be held accountable for the commitments they have made to each other. In most cases, accountability is through reports, both financial and activity reports. Respondents were asked questions regarding their partnership reporting habits. Key informants were also queried on this indicator and its importance. Key informant one stated that,

'Mutual accountability systems are important in the practice of partnerships since they bring out two things: trust and transparency. Trust allows for a more effective working relationship and is only possible if all partners disclose what they do and how they do it. However, in practice, the burden of reporting is on the pivotal and beneficiary partners only.'

In North-South partnerships the burden of accountability is on the South partner and it seems that this situation is not so different in Triangular Cooperation according to the key informants. Rarely does the donor partner do any accountability to the other two partners. And in the reverse, the two receiving partners rarely ask for accountability from the donor partner. Key informant three also adds that, *'this indicator is very important since it goes to show respect among the partners.'* Its absence may imply the reverse.

The partnership leaders and committee members gave credence to this view of the burden of partnership accountability being on the beneficiary and pivotal partners. Leaders one and two explain the reporting process in the partnership where,

'We use a reporting template from the funding organization. All head teachers make their own individual reports then we sit down and compile them into one report that is sent to our Norway partners who then forward the report to the funding organization. We also do financial reporting after an activity that has utilized funds sent to us. We use the template from the funding organization and send receipts as supporting documents. These financial reports are also sent to our Norway partners who reconcile their accounts as well and send the report to the funding organization. This is because all partnership money is first sent to the bank accounts of the Norway partner.' (Partnership leader one)

When asked whether they get reports from the Norway partner, the leaders from the South indicate that, *'at times we do, at times we do not but this is not a requirement.'* In analyzing whether the partners ever receive or request partnership updates from each other, leader one answered that, *'yes we do, from our partner in the North and we sometimes request for updates from our South partner school.'* While leader two stated that, *'Yes, from both partners. Update reports are usually done on the phone or by email but we never make any requests from either of our partners.'* Leader three notes that they never get any update requests from their partners but that, *'we always send regular updates on what we are doing mostly to the communication coordinators in our partner schools.'*

The researcher found this response from partner three surprising since one of the concerns that were raised by leaders one and two and their corresponding committee members was that,

'There is insufficient communication and updates from funding organization and Northern partner and we have little interaction with our Norway partners and hence less updates from them.'

Partnership reviews and assessments are also another tool for accountability. If these assessments and reviews are done jointly, the aspect of mutuality is introduced. However, for this partnership, there has not been any joint review or assessment. Leader one however notes that,

'we as a school have done only one review of the partnership which was based on a template from the funding organization but it was at a time when we did not have a lot of information regarding the partnership and hence not too sure about what we were to report about. I am not sure how our Norwegian partner and the funding organization viewed us when we sent these project evaluation reports. They must have been seeing us as empty heads'

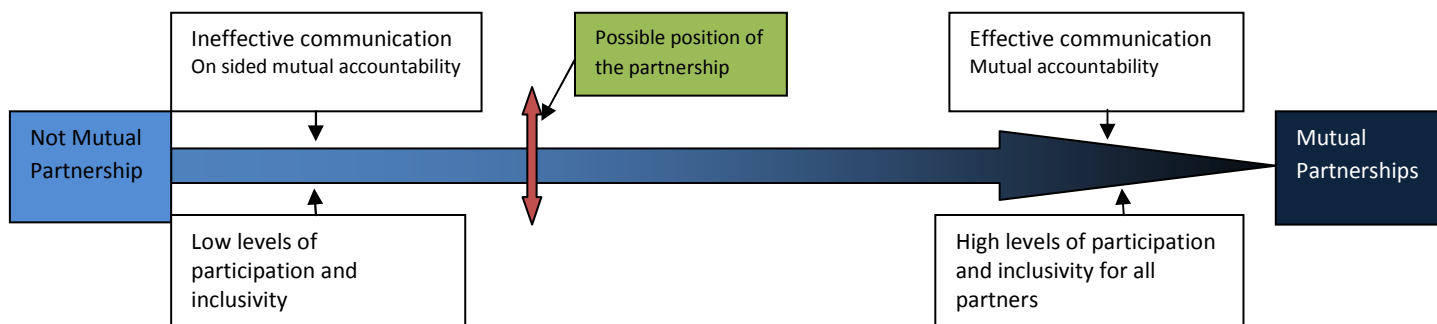
Leaders two and three indicate that have never had any such review or assessment or at least not formally as leader two answers this question, *'Not formally. Mostly, we observe the changes that have taken place in the school as a result of the project and then we know there are some positive outcomes.'* No joint assessment and review has ever been done and as leader one notes, *'It has been indicated that we should have such a review but we haven't done that yet.'*

This system of accountability draws an interesting picture of the order of things in the partnership and the kinds of relationships that the three partners have. If we were to arrange the three partners in order of importance based on this analysis, we may place the Norwegian partner at the top or senior most position with the Zimbabwe partner at the bottom. This indicator seems to have a close correlation with the indicator of resources contribution and access.

The mutuality indicators for this study were: participation and accountability, communication and coordination, resource contribution and access and mutual accountability. The findings under this section show that the partnership is not doing so well in terms of mutuality. However, the importance of mutuality in a partnership did not receive a consensus among the key informants. The two South schools were not fully included in the formation of the partnership. Their participation and inclusivity in decision making has however improved over time but still not at the same levels as their North partner. Communication and coordination in the partnership is neither sound nor regular hence ineffective. The challenges to effective partnership have to do with poor access to internet enabled computers, which

the mode of communication most relied on by South schools and especially the Zimbabwe school. Whether the issue of resource contribution and access has a bearing on the mutuality of a partnership or not, was not conclusively determined as the key respondents had differing views. Though the North partner contributes most resources, this does not seem to have a bearing on the relationships between the partners as they are satisfied with the system as it is. Mutual accountability is important in the practice of partnerships. It is still the burden of the South schools as the North school does not always (and is not required to) report to the other two schools. The Zimbabwe school however reports to the other two schools while the Malawi school only reports to the Norway school. The partners have however never carried out a joint partnership review or assessment which is another tool of accountability. The presence and realization of the indicators of mutuality in a partnership can be viewed as in a continuum moving towards greater mutuality which is deemed as the ideal in partnerships. This can be diagrammatically presented in a continuum as seen in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Continuum of mutuality indicators in a partnership towards greater mutuality



Source: Own Conceptualization

Based on the mutuality findings this Malawi-Norway-Zimbabwe school partnership can be seen lie somewhere between the extreme left of the continuum (not mutual partnership) and the centre of the continuum. This is because, though there have been some efforts to improve the elements of mutuality like inclusivity and participation, the reality of the partnership is that the realization of these elements is still wanting.

4.3: Nature of relationships among the partners in the Triangular Cooperation partnership

Partnerships constitute partners who interact in the course of implementing the partnership mandate. These interactions can be looked at as relationships. The partnership processes and interactions between the partners inform and are informed by the relationships between the partners.

Understanding the nature of these relationships was thus important in determining the mutuality of the partnership.

The findings on this element brought out the fact that the relationships between the partners were not linear and were informed by the mutuality element of communication. Further findings show that this particular partnership is part of a wider network of schools in the three countries as explained by the three leaders as they were describing the partnership formation process.

'The partner schools come from Malawi, Zimbabwe and Norway. There are five schools in each country and each of these schools has a partner in each country and all the five schools in each of the three countries work together as a network.'

Though each school has specific partners, the network as a whole is quite involved through consultation and planning meetings. Decisions especially in the South schools are made jointly among the ten schools in both countries according to leaders from the South. The Norway schools operate a little bit more individually as indicated by the coordinator. These different actors, separate from the three (Bambino School, St. Paul's Primary School and Trosvik Skole) may have a bearing on the relationships among this three partners. The funding organization which stipulates the nature of association through its policies for example where the South partners have to report to the North partners as discussed above under the accountability indicator already influences how these three partners interact. The identification of the North partner as the primary partner also sets the tone of interaction for the partners. This is a point that was raised by key informant three who stated that,

'However, an important point to note is that the tone and language used in the interaction among partners heavily determines whether a partnership is genuine or not.'

Such identification of partners sets the pecking order if you may, among the partners with the primary partner appearing superior to the other two.

To better understand this element the question of the nature of relationships among the three partners in a partnership was posed to the key informants. Key informant two once again provides a summary statement on the issue of the nature of relationships among partners in a partnership. She states that,

'The relationships among partners are very webby and cumulated. They are not on a straight line. There are other players involved in such partnerships like embassies and NGOs. It is not

simply the three partners involved. Issues of policies also arise where partners may have to work with the ministries of education in the different countries.'

In addition to the views by key informant two, key informant one and three add that,

'Sad to say but the issue of balance of power exists. Relationships between partners relate to the position a partner occupies. They are also determined by the purpose of the partnership. Each partner has an agenda for being involved in the partnership and hence, there is some kind of dependency among them. However, though the dependency relationship indicates some sort of give and take aspects and denotes a win-win situation, this 'win-win' scenario is not equal' (Key informant one)

'Countries in partnership have different relationships and the natures of these relationships are dependent on the capacity and strong will of each country.' (Key informant three)

These statements point out the fact partner relations are very relative. Basing our analysis on the views by key informant two and the research findings, this Norway-Malawi- Zimbabwe partnership has the funding organization as a major actor over and above the three schools. Findings also indicate that *'it is closer to the North school than either of us'* according to Leader Two. This is an indication of the complexity of the relationships in this partnership. This close relationship may explain why the South partners are of the opinion that the Norway school has a stronger voice in the partnership as noted in earlier discussion. An explanation for this close relationship could be that the North school and the funding organization are from the same country. The funding organization also identifies the North partner as the primary partner with corresponding responsibilities like being the financial partner for the partnership as well. This is according to leader one who states that,

'In the agreement, the Norway school is seen as the primary partner while the others are regarded as secondary partners and that all the funds are sent to the Norwegian partner's accounts then disbursed to the other partners based on need'

By analyzing the responses from those involved in the partnership, the respondents agree that the relationship between any two partners was not similar. This according to the three leaders, who state that,

'We do not have a similar partnership relationship with the two partners. We are closer to the Zimbabwe group than Norway. This is because we are closer in culture and communication is more personal through the phone instead of the official partnership emails. We also have a common language with some of the Zimbabweans in the group that makes communication easier and more personal.' (Partnership leader one)

'Naturally Malawi and Zimbabwe are closer even though we have a weaker voice than Norway. We however relate with them very cordially. Norway is closer to the sponsors while we and the Malawians are not so close. Our relations with both teams are however good' (Partner leader two)

'If I were to compare our closeness to our partners, I would say that we are closer to the Malawi school than the one in Zimbabwe. The political problems in Zimbabwe have meant that our students and teachers have never visited the school in Zimbabwe and also it is usually difficult to get regular communication with the school in Zimbabwe due to internet challenges unlike the Malawi school.' (Partner Leader Three)

As earlier noted, the Malawi and Norway partners communicate more. However, in general, the Malawi and Zimbabwe partners have a closer relationship. But, the Norway partner attributes their closer relationship to Malawi partner to partly, the ease and frequency of communication. This may imply that this insufficient communication between the Zimbabwe and Norway partner does affect the relationships between them in a negative way. These findings highlight the truth of the views of Key Informant Two who stated that relationships between partners are *'webby, cumulated and not in a straight line.'* The close relationship between the funding organization and the Norway partner mentioned above may make the South schools feel alienated and may also explain the closer relationship to each other. This analysis is from responses by the leaders only. Committee members from all partner schools indicate that they barely have any form of relationships with their partners. What they know of their partners' activities and especially of the Northern partner is based on what their coordinators tell them.

Findings under this section bring out the fact that these relationships are dynamic, webby, cumulated and relative. These relationships seem to be affected by the balance of power between the partners, the strong will and capacity of each partner. The presence of another actor (the funding organization)

further compounded the relationships among the three partners. The two South partners appear to be closer to each other than to the North partner while the North partner is closer to the Malawi school. Ease of communication between these two partners (Malawi and Norway) has a lot to do with this close relationship.

4.4: The effectiveness of the Triangular Cooperation partnership

Partnership effectiveness was the dependent concept for this research study. Effectiveness has to do with successfully producing a desired or intended result. For this paper, the researcher conceptualized this variable and came up with two broad indicators: goal achievement and partnership satisfaction. The findings on these are discussed below. Respondents were asked what an effective partnership meant to them. Table 3 summarizes the different criteria and descriptions used to judge the effectiveness of a project as per the different respondents.

Table 3: Characteristics of an effective partnership according to different respondents

| Criteria and descriptions used to judge an effective partnership | Respondents |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Transparency</i> • <i>Good working relationships</i> • <i>Equal responsibility for the project</i> • <i>Regular communication</i> • <i>Mutual respect among members</i> • <i>A shared vision and values</i> • <i>Adherence to agreements among members</i> • <i>Goal achievement</i> • <i>Regular partnership reviews and assessments</i> • <i>Sufficient resources</i> • <i>Being on equal footing as far as resource contribution and decision making are concerned</i> • <i>Amicable working relationships</i> • <i>Effective communication</i> • <i>Trust among partners</i> | <p><i>Partnership leader one and Key informant three</i> <i>Partnership leader one</i> <i>Committee member two</i> <i>Committee member one</i> <i>Partnership leader two and Key informant three</i> <i>Partnership leader two</i></p> <p><i>Partnership leader two</i></p> <p><i>Partnership leader three, Key informants one, two and three, Committee member one</i> <i>Partnership leader one, Committee member two,</i></p> <p><i>Partnership leader three,</i> <i>Committee member three</i></p> <p><i>Key informant two</i> <i>Key informant two, Partnership leader two</i> <i>Committee member one</i></p> |

Source: Own Conceptualization

A review of this list makes it clear that the link between the indicators of mutuality and what constitutes an effective partnership is quite strong. When the leaders and committee members were asked whether they thought that this partnership was effective or not, all but one of the respondents from this school partnership was of the opinion that the partnership was effective. This respondent that is of the contrary opinion was committee member one who stated that,

'No, since there's little interaction, discussions and sharing as partners'

The understanding of this respondent of an effective partnership is heavily dependent on the indicator of partner satisfaction which when broken down, has to do with the attitudes and concerns among partners and regarding the partnership.

Goal achievement as an indicator of an effective partnership was mentioned by several respondents both from the partnership and by the key informants. When asked whether the goals of the partnership had been met, the general opinion was that the goals had not been fully met and Leader Two's response is a representation these views when he said,

'The goals of the partnership have not been fully met. Some have but not all.'

If we were to base our effectiveness judgment on the findings of this indicator the outcome would be that this partnership is falling short of achieving effectiveness. Respondents were also asked what factors contributed to the achievement or non-achievement of the goals. The leaders explained these factors as:

'Funding is an issue since the amount of funds available are not sufficient for our school since we are in a lot of need and do not get support from the government at all' (Partnership Leader One)

'Resources availability is a big challenge and since the school is government sponsored, supporting the project is a challenge' (Partnership Leader Two)

'Administrative and student support for this project is sometimes a challenge and also, we face the challenge of convincing the school to set aside funds for this project as stipulated in the agreement' (Partner Leader Three)

These challenges have more to do with technical issues than with the partnership processes and partners. The way the partnership is run does not seem to be a factor that influences the non-

achievement of goals. On the positive side however, Leader Two notes that, *'however, the goals that we have achieved have been due to our partners who are as source of motivation. When we travel and see what has been achieved in either Malawi or Norway, we are motivated to achieve more.'* This may imply that the partners have a positive influence of the partners on goal achievement.

Partner satisfaction as an indicator of effectiveness is conceptualized as the attitudes towards partners, the perception or image of the partnership and the concerns regarding the partnership. The research captured the respondents' attitudes towards their partners and the partnership. Key informant one responding to the question of how important positive attitudes are among partners was of the view that, *'it is all relative.'* He goes further and explains that, '

'The idea is that the partners understand each other. The donor partners have their own agenda to fulfill and so do the other partners. If the partnership is smaller, then maybe, yes, positive attitudes among partners could become an issue. In extreme cases however, attitudes whether positive or not become a non-issue.'

On the partners' views or perception of the partnership and whether it matters, Key informant one notes that, *'this is only important in trilateral partnership (where three countries that are on a more or less equal footing economically, come together) but not in a Triangular Cooperation. Personal partner motivations and goals and their realization are the driving force of triangular partnerships.'*

This view is supported by Key informant two who notes that,

'though positive views of a partnership and partners are important, negative attitudes among partners are not always enough to stop a partnership and the motivations of joining the partnership form the bottom line.'

This key informant however still thought that positive attitudes among partners and positive perceptions of the partnership are important. She gives an example where countries that are not in good relations could be blacklisted and not be involved in development cooperation. She gave a case point of Zimbabwe and its strained relationships with the EU. She also states that, *'even if goals are met, the views and attitudes among partners affect the effectiveness of a partnership and future contracts.'*

From respondents in the partnership, there was a positive feeling when asked about opinions regarding this partnership. Partnership Leader one, two and three stated that, *'this partnership has been an eye opener and a learning point for me', 'It is necessary. Though we are faced with challenges of*

coordination, the benefits to our school are great and so such a partnership should continue. It is satisfactory' and 'I believe this partnership is a success. All projects take time and quite a bit of effort to get started. Our project is now moving over into a more established phase' respectively.

The question on the attitudes towards their partners was posed to the committee members. The findings also point towards positivity among the partners. The various responses to highlight this were:

'I am grateful to our Norwegian partner for the funding they provide and to our Zimbabwe partner, they are a motivation and we have learnt a lot from them.' (Committee member one)

'I value both partners, but I also recognize that one partner has been more involved than the other' (Committee member three)

The researcher noticed that though all positive, there was a differentiation of attitudes towards individual partners.

The last effectiveness indicator that was examined was on the concerns that partners have of the partnership. The three informants listed the following as the possible concerns that partners may have regarding the partnership. They are: Some partners may not deliver on set promises, power is skewed towards the partner with resources, there may be preliminaries to be achieved before resources are disbursed which in turn affect the project time and donor partner exercising power and control over the other partners.

When the same question was posed to the partnership members and leaders, the concerns that they raised were:

- i. Insufficient funds*
- ii. Lack of inclusion in the decision making process (for committee members),*
- iii. Little interaction and communication with Norwegian partners (for committee members),*
- iv. insufficient communication and updates from funding organization and Norwegian partner,*
- v. communication challenges with and between the South countries due to the high cost of and limited access to internet services and;*

vi. *Few meetings between partners to discuss agenda and programmes.*

Looking at these concerns, the first concern of insufficient resources is far removed from the others. The second concern through to the sixth can be categorized as issues of communication and coordination and inclusivity and participation. These five concerns also clearly link indicators of partnership effectiveness and those of mutuality.

When comparing the importance of the two aspects of effective partnerships (goal achievement and partner satisfaction), Key respondent one was of the opinion that,

'Realistically, goal achievement is the most important indicator of partnership effectiveness. This is much more than the indicator of partner satisfaction. Partner satisfaction on the other hand is actually dependent on goal achievement.'

However, key informants two and three were of the same opinion regarding this, with key informant three stating that, *'the two go hand in hand.'* i.e. goal achievement ensures partner satisfaction and partner satisfaction leads to goal achievement. The first key informant however was of the opinion that goal achievement is more important. These views go hand in hand with this respondent's earlier views that personal partner agendas and motivations are more important than the views and attitudes of the partners on the partnership and among the partners. The importance of goal achievement in the partnership could also be seen from the responses of the committee members when they stated that,

'Yes it is effective because a number of schools have benefited from the projects and because some of the objectives were achieved, e.g. Permaculture in schools is in full force.' (Committee member three)

'Yes it is working because compared to schools not in the partnership, the difference is blatant.' (Partnership Leader One)

These views place great importance on the benefits to the school from the partnership which can be seen as the achieved goals of the partnership. The link between the benefits to schools and the goals of the partnership according to the partnership leaders is summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Goals of joining partnership and benefits to partner schools

| Goals of the partnership | | | Benefits to schools | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|--|
| School One | School Two | School Three | School One | School Two | School Three |
| Cultural exchange Curriculum and syllabus delivery support, Exchange of pedagogical skills Sharing and exchanging school administration skills | Re-green the school environment Develop self-reliance in learners Water conservation Learn and practice sustainable land use practices | Cultural exchange Global learning for students | Improved environment in schools Gained knowledge and skills of permaculture Exchange of skills among the partners Use of a climate change text book developed jointly for teaching Reduced stereotypes of different cultures | Proceeds from permaculture project used to feed poorer students Increased appreciation of people of different cultural backgrounds, Greening our school grounds Acquisition of water conservation facilities like tanks from partners | students and teachers got important information about different living conditions Improved English Students learned that we live on the same earth and share the same problems concerning the environment. |

Source: Own Conceptualization

Table 4 is a summary of the partner school’s goals for joining the partnership and the benefits of being in the partnership to the school. Looking at these goals and benefits to the schools brings to mind a statement by key informant one when he said that,

‘What one gets from the partnership may be an indication of the order of importance among the partners’

School one and two have more basic goals and the benefits that they cite as having achieved are also more basic as compared to school three. However, if we are to separate school one and two, school two appears to have the most basic goals and benefits such as the acquisition of water tanks from their partners. School three on the other hand has broader goals and the benefits to its school do not have to do with basic needs but more of awareness among the students and teachers on global interconnectedness.

The importance of goal achievement over partner satisfaction can also be supported by the fact that despite the fact that the South partners think that the Norway partner has more power, accounts less

often to the other partners and is somewhat lacking in terms of regular communication, the partnership is *'good and should continue'* according to leaders one and two. This goes to show that views and attitudes among partners may not be a hindrance to development partnerships.

One of the goals of this study was to determine whether this partnership was effective or not. The findings in this section brought out the characteristics of an effective partnership according to the different respondents. These characteristics included transparency and trust, good working relationships, goal achievement, effective communication and partnership reviews and assessments among others. These characteristics show a strong link between the indicators of the two variables under study. Not all goals of the partnership were however met which reflects negatively on the effectiveness of the partnership. The reason for the non-achievement of the partnership had little to do with the partnership processes and partners. The concerns regarding the partnership on the other hand had a lot to do with issues of communication and coordination and participation and inclusivity. The only separate concern had to do with insufficiency of resources which was mentioned several times. The partners appeared to have positive perceptions and attitudes towards the partnership and partners. Despite not all goals being met and a general positive view of the partnership and partners, goal achievement still appeared to be the most important indicator of the partnership effectiveness.

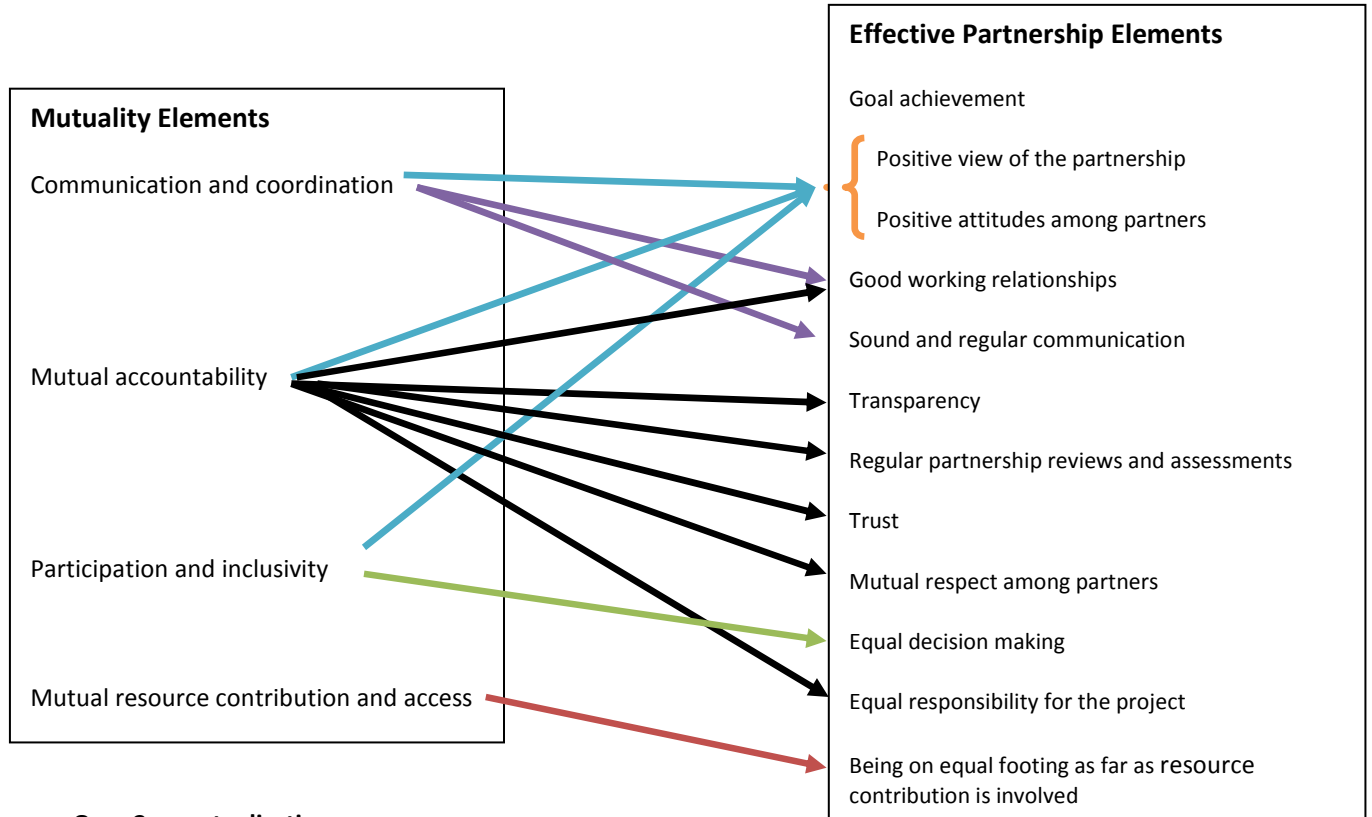
4.5: The influence of mutuality on the effectiveness of a Triangular Cooperation partnership

This section of the research brings together the findings of the two concepts under study. The objective of this is to ascertain whether and how the mutuality elements influence the achievement of an effective partnership according to the field findings.

Looking at what an effective partnership entails according to the respondents, the descriptions highly coincide with the indicators of mutuality under study as has been highlighted in the previous section. The characteristics of an effective partnership according to the respondents are: goal achievement, regular partnership reviews and assessments, sufficient resources, 'being on an equal footing in as far as resource contribution and decision making are concerned', transparency, good working relationships, equal responsibility for the project, sound and regular communication, trust and mutual respect among members. These characteristics are summarised in Table 3. On the other hand the mutuality indicators being examined were: communication and coordination, mutual accountability, participation and

inclusivity and mutual resources contribution and access. Figure 6 illustrates this relationship between the two variables or where the two merge.

Figure 6: Link between the mutuality elements and effective partnership elements



Source: Own Conceptualization

The link between the two concepts was quite clear. The link was however strongest or most clear between the three mutuality elements (communication and coordination, mutual accountability and participation and inclusivity) and effectiveness element of partner satisfaction. The definitions of an effective partnership according to respondents were also strongly linked to the three mutuality elements.

The Figure 6 highlights the myriad of connection points between the effectiveness elements and the mutuality elements as per the field findings. The arrows indicate the direction of influence. The communication and coordination indicator of mutuality is linked to indicators of an effective partnership of amicable and good working relationships and sound and regular communication. These indicators are strongly linked with the realization of positively influencing the other. Effective communication is a basic

foundation of any effective partnership according to view of partnership leader one. The leader (one) in his statement that, *'prior to 2010, there was little effectiveness of the partnership since us in the South lacked some information'* brings these two variables as together as can be. Though things seem to have improved in the partnership since its formation, the findings on this mutuality indicator are however not very positive. The mode of communication most relied on is not so readily available to all partners, and where available, it is only the leaders. The frequency of communication is also not so regular as is seen in the concerns raised. The concerns are of *'insufficient communication and updates from the funding organization and Norwegian partner and communication challenges with and between the South countries due to the high cost of and limited access to internet services.'* In linking these findings to the effectiveness of the partnership, a likely conclusion is that, the communication is neither sound nor regular and hence fails on the effectiveness test.

The mutual accountability indicator which when realized in practice leads to transparency and trust which are indicators of an effective partnership. This relationship was also highlighted by Key informant one when he stated that,

'Mutual accountability systems are important in the practice of partnerships since they bring out two things: trust and transparency. Trust allows for a more effective working relationship and is only possible if all partners disclose what they do and how they do it.'

Participation and inclusivity as an indicator of mutuality is linked to the effective indicator of equal decision making. When a partnership is inclusive and participatory, all partners are ideally part of the decision making process. However, Key informant two was of the opinion that *'there is a lot of romanticism around participation and inclusivity and the most one can hope for is movement towards greater participation and inclusivity.'* True as this may be, the fact that partnership leaders from the South and the committee members raised their inclusion in formation, implementation and general decision making as concern (past and present), means that partners involved still view it as an important factor in the partnership. The challenges that were faced by the South partners during the partnership formative years also point to the importance of this indicator. Leader one when commenting on the review and assessment of the partnership brought out a point linked to their participation in the partnership when he stated that, *'...but it was at a time when we did not have a lot of information regarding the partnership and hence not too sure about what we were to report about.'*

The researcher also noted that the effectiveness indicator of partner satisfaction which when broken down is made up of the views of the partnership, attitudes among partners and concerns regarding the partnership, is closely interlinked with the mutuality indicators of communication and coordination, mutual accountability and participation and inclusivity. Effective communication and coordination, mutual accountability and high levels of participation and inclusion in the partnership processes lead to positive views and images of the partnership and positive attitudes among the partners. The realization of these indicators in a partnership also reduces the concerns regarding the partnership. The negative response from committee member three on the effectiveness of the partnership is seen to be based on this relationship. Her response was *'no, the partnership is not effective because there is little interaction, discussion and sharing among partners.'* Her response goes to point out the truth of the conclusion that the realization of the three mutuality indicators mentioned above, leads to the realization of the partner satisfaction indicator.

The influence of insufficient resources (mentioned as a concern) on the two variables is not so clear. Leader one mentions this as a challenge to the partnership when he says that, *'resources are also not sufficient to really implement this partnership.'* A mutual partnership calls for a mutual resource contribution and access system. Mutual however does not mean or imply equal. The research findings show that the three partners do not contribute equally but all are satisfied with the system as it is as highlighted in the discussion under this indicator above. The reason for this was given as, *'our partner schools are not in a position to contribute any money to this partnership and even the funding organization understands this'* according to Leader three. However, a partnership requires sufficient resources for its effective implementation. The question thus becomes whether the insufficient resources reflect negatively on this mutuality indicator or it independently influences the achievement of an effective partnership. This is an area that may require further studies for better understanding.

The interconnections between the mutuality indicators and the indicators and characteristics of an effective partnership as illustrated in Figure 6 draw an interesting finding. Based on the number of connections that each mutuality indicator has to indicators of effective partnerships, we may state that mutual accountability is the strongest of all mutuality indicators. This indicator is connected to seven effectiveness indicators meaning that its influence on the effectiveness of a partnership is quite strong. The indicator of resource contribution and access has only one connection which would imply that its influence on the effectiveness of the partnership is quite weak. According to the findings on this

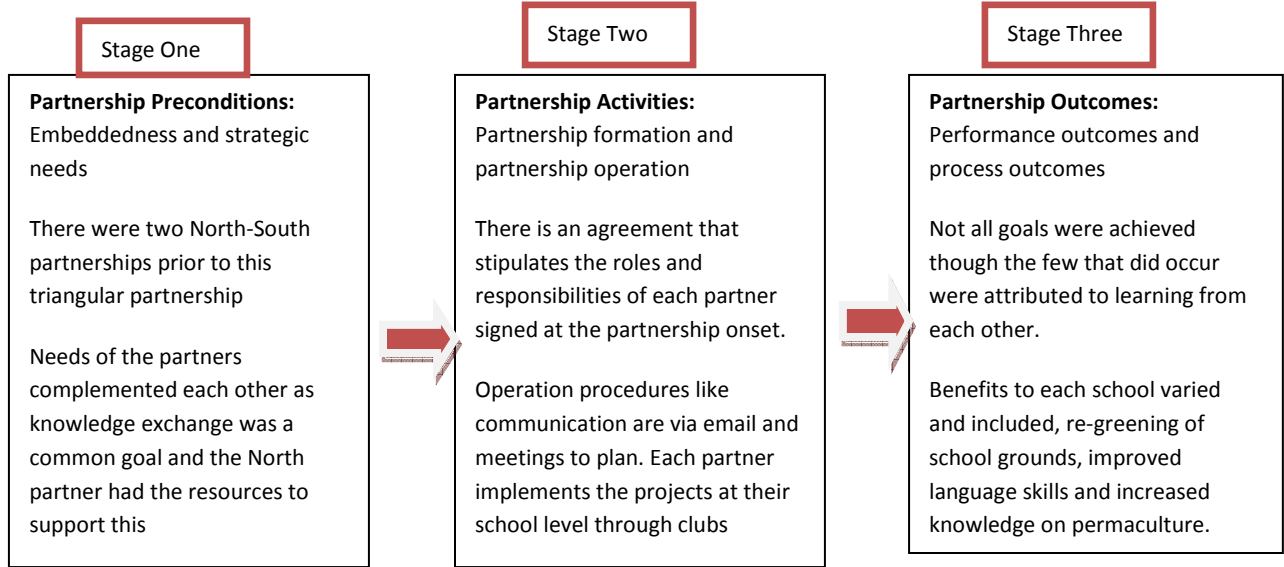
indicator in section 4.2 above, the truth of this statement is proven at least with regard to this partnership.

The partnership effectiveness indicator of goal achievement generated mixed reactions on its importance relative to partner satisfaction. The research findings indicated that the partnership goals have not been achieved in full. The goals that have been achieved however are the main reason why most respondents indicated that the partnership is working and is effective despite the other concerns and challenges that they experience in the partnership. This implies an importance of this indicator even for the respondents in judging the effectiveness of the partnership. This effectiveness is despite of the concerns that point negatively towards the actual mutuality of this partnership as they relate closely to the indicators of communication and coordination, participation and inclusivity and mutual accountability. This is a major finding. The researcher finds this as a point of separation for the two variables, where the low levels of mutuality observed in the partnership do not affect the perception of an effective partnership by the respondents. This finding gives credence to the view by key informant one that noted that goal achievement is the overriding indicator of an effective partnership. His statement was, *'realistically, goal achievement is the most important indicator of partnership effectiveness.'*

The findings therefore show that the influence of mutuality on the effectiveness of a partnership is uniform for all the four indicators. Mutual accountability appeared to have the strongest influence based on the number of interconnections with the characteristics and indicators of an effective partnership. The indicator of resource contribution and access had the least influence on partnership effectiveness though the issue of insufficient resources do negatively impact a partnership's effectiveness. Communication and coordination do influence the effectiveness of a partnership in the realization of amicable working relations between the partners are concerned. Participation and inclusivity influences the effectiveness characteristic of equal decision making. Additionally, the three mutuality indicators of communication and coordination, participation and inclusivity and mutual accountability do have a strong influence on the effectiveness indicator partner satisfaction.

In summary, this partnership from its formation through to the implementation, can be seen to confirm the partnership conceptual model that has three stages as discussed by Kingsley and O'Neil (2004). Figure 7 is a diagrammatical representation this partnership under study based on this model.

Figure 7: The Norway-Malawi-Zimbabwe Partnership conceptual model



Source: Based on Kingsley and O'Neil (2004) Partnership Conceptual Model

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.0: Introduction

This final chapter seeks to provide a review of the findings in relation to the research questions and the literature review. The main aim of this research project was to ascertain the importance of the principle of mutuality in the practice of Triangular Cooperation. The first part of the chapter will provide a summary of the research findings in light of the research questions and the theoretical descriptions of what a mutual and effective partnership is as per the literature review to see how the Norway-Malawi-Zimbabwe partnership fares. This will then lead to the general conclusions and recommendations for further studies on this topic and regarding the partnership itself.

5.1: Summary of research findings

5.1.1: Characteristics of Triangular Cooperation

The first research question asked: What are the characteristics of the Triangular Cooperation education partnership under study?

The findings for this question were to be expected. The characteristics of the partnership that were being investigated were in regard to the actors, the activities, the roles and nature of participation of the partners. According to literature, Triangular Cooperation is a partnership between members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee and pivotal countries to implement programmes or projects in beneficiary countries. The actors may also include governments, civil society organizations and also an international agency. It may also adopt any one of the four different models based on the point of initiation according to OECD (2010).

In terms of actors, the partnership is made up of three schools from Norway, Malawi and Zimbabwe. Norway, which is a member of the OECD Development Assistance Committee, clearly takes up the identity of the donor partner. The identity of the pivotal and beneficiary partner was however a little difficult to ascertain between the school in Malawi and the one in Zimbabwe though it may seem that the Malawi school was the pivotal country. This was based on answers pertaining to the accountability and communication indicators. However, according to OECD lists, Malawi is not on the list of pivotal countries found in Africa. Pivotal countries are identified as providers of South-South Cooperation. This lack of a clear pivotal or beneficiary partner in this partnership is in contrast with the definition of what

a Triangular Cooperation according to Fordelone (2009) and OECD (2013). Neither of the two South partners fit the identity of the pivotal country. This may mean that the definition and description of Triangular Cooperation may need to be expanded to accommodate partnerships like this. There was also the presence of the funding organization which together with the Norway school, provide the monetary resources for the partnership. The partnership also adopted one of the models of Triangular Cooperation according to OECD (2013) based on the point of initiation of the partnership. It resulted from two distinct North-South partnerships which had Norway as a common North partner. From the onset, all three partners were already present. The nature of the school participation and the system of working with thematic projects also fell into a Triangular Cooperation categorization as per Ashoff (2010) who noted that Triangular Cooperation is characterized by a large number of mostly small projects. In regard to the motivations of joining the partnership, the findings showed that this partnership adopted the learning and strategic approaches to partnership emergence and formation according to Barringer and Harrison (2000). This is because learning from each other; knowledge exchange and solving some of the problems in their schools like bare grounds were some of the motivations mentioned for joining the partnership. The findings indicated that this partnership appears to have adopted a single-organization leadership style instead of the more preferred joint responsibility and accountability which characterizes strong partnerships according to Dhillon (2013). Strong partnerships are equated to effective partnerships.

5.1.2: Mutuality indicators

Research question two asked: What indicators of mutuality are present in the Triangular Cooperation partnership project under study?

Mutuality was the independent variable for this study. It is a principle of Triangular cooperation and is hailed as one of the requirements in its formation and implementation. Some respondents deemed it to be very important but also very hard to realize in partnerships while others thought that in practice it was not necessary. The most that one could hope for was realization in varying degrees, something that resonates with the views of Fowler (2002). The findings of the four indicators being investigated showed that the extent of their realization differed with considerable emphasis on communication and coordination and accountability by the respondents. The third indicator of resource contribution was linked to these two indicators but its findings were not so conclusive. The findings also indicated that the partner that contributed most resources wielded more power. This may be true of this partnership since

the Norway partner had a stronger voice in the partnership and also contributed most resources. This resource contribution system as it was however did not seem to be an issue among the partners and hence the lack of a solid conclusion on this. The two South partners appeared as the weaker partners in this partnership as the levels of participation and inclusivity were on the lower side as per the findings of this study. The situation as it was at the time of study was an improvement from the early stages of the partnership where there was barely any participation and inclusion of the South partners. Mutual accountability however, was a burden of the two South schools as they report, not to the funding organization, but to their North partner. The North partner on the other hand was not obliged to do the same and in most cases did not account to its partners though the South partners would like better accountability from them. Communication and coordination in the partnership was not very effective. This was due to inaccessibility to the most common mode of communication that is email. This challenge was mostly on South schools. This impacted the nature of relationships in the partnership. The findings thus show that the mutuality indicators of communication and coordination, mutual accountability and participation and inclusivity were in the lower levels of the mutuality continuum.

5.1.3: Nature of relationships among partners

Research question three asked: What are the differences in the nature of relationships between the partners in the Triangular Cooperation partnership being studied?

The interactions among the three partners were looked at as relationships and it was important to understand the nature of these relationships as they were telling of the mutuality (or lack of) of the partnerships. The findings showed that these relationships are not linear and involved other players such as the funding organization and the other network schools. The funding organization and the North partner had a closer relationship while the two South schools were closer to each other than to the North school. This was despite the fact that at the onset of this partnership, these two schools were not in partnership with each other at all. However, the leader of the Malawi school was closer and relates better with the leader of the school in Norway. Ease of communication had a lot to do with this closeness and the findings also showed that the insufficient communication between the Zimbabwe and Norway school played a role in the nature of their relationship. Based on the model of Triangular Cooperation that this partnership seemed to adopt where all three partners were present at the onset of the partnership, it is surprising that some partners are closer to each other than others. Had the model been any of the other three that were presented by OECD (2013) where a third partner joined an

already existing bilateral partnership, this closeness between the two earlier partners could be understood. However, the closer relationship observed between the South schools was cited as being due to being closer geographically, culturally, economically and in terms of a shared language. This finding was in line with what Vagale and Zelinsky (found in Bontenbal and van Lindert, 2006) feel on the compatibility of the partners in a relationship being a pre-requisite for good partnership. They give examples of these compatibilities as some sharing of economic, cultural, ideological, historical or recreational aspects.

5.1.4: Effective Triangular Cooperation Partnership

Research question four asked: To what extent can the Triangular Cooperation partnership under study be considered an effective partnership?

The indicators of an effective partnership for this study were goal achievement and partner satisfaction. The characteristics of an effective partnership as given by the respondents were: transparency, good working relationships, equal responsibility for the project, sound and regular communication, trust and mutual respect among members, goal achievement, regular partnership reviews and assessments, sufficient resources, shared vision and mission and 'being on an equal footing in as far as resource contribution and decision making are concerned'. In regard to the goal achievement indicator, findings showed that not all partnership goals had been met. The main reason given for this was the insufficiency of resources and not anything to do with the partnership processes. The reasons for the achievement of some of the goals were given as the ability and opportunity of learning from each other as partners and the motivation from each other to achieve more. However, this non-achievement of all the goals of the partnership reflected negatively on its effectiveness. The partner satisfaction indicator findings showed positive feelings among the partners though somewhat differentiated when it came to individual partners. The partnership was also deemed to be working and effective by the respondents and the main reason for this was that some goals had been met. However, basing our judgment of the effectiveness of this partnership on literature definitions of the same and what the respondents consider an effective partnership, the conclusion is that to a large extent, this partnership is not effective. The concerns raised regarding the partnership included: a lack of inclusion in the decision making process, little interaction, insufficient communication and updates from Norwegian partner and funding organization, communication challenges with and between the South countries due to the high cost of and limited access to internet services and, few meetings between partners to discuss agenda

and programmes. These concerns also impact negatively on the partner satisfaction indicator and hence general partnership effectiveness.

5.1.5: Influence of mutuality on the achievement of effective partnerships

The fifth research question asked: To what extent do the variations in mutuality influence the achievement of an effective Triangular Cooperation education partnership?

Looking at the mutuality and partnership effectiveness findings independently, this partnership did not score very highly on either. But in linking these two variables a close relationship was observed. The descriptions of an effective partnership and three of the four indicators of mutuality closely correlate. Effective communication and coordination, mutual accountability and high levels of participation and inclusion in the partnership processes positively influence partner satisfaction. The relationship between partnership effectiveness and the resource contribution indicator of mutuality did not however have conclusive findings. The issue at hand was the insufficiency of the resources and not so much the contribution system. Insufficient resources do negatively influence the effectiveness of a project but the presence or lack of a mutual resource contribution system did not seem to be an issue in partnership implementation. In addition, not all goals were achieved in the partnership. The few goals that were achieved however went a long way towards fostering positive views of the partnership. This was the reason the partnership was seen as to be working and effective. However, this partial achievement was not attributed to any of the mutuality indicators and neither was the non-achievement of goals. This finding thus puts a question mark on the link between goal achievement and mutuality of the partnership. This lack of direct link between these indicators was a surprising finding.

5.2: Conclusions and further development studies research

This final section provides a conclusion of this research report based on the case study that was studied. Considering that this was a one case study research project, the findings discussed above cannot be assumed to be reflective of all triangular partnerships. However case studies facilitate learning on the part of those who use them; and that this involves 'naturalistic generalization', a quite different kind of generalization from that which is characteristic of science (Stake, 1995). These findings were thus meant to facilitate the understanding of the practice of Triangular Development Cooperation.

Therefore, in conclusion, the researcher is of the opinion that to a large extent, the research questions and research objectives have been answered and met respectively. By choosing to study just one school-

school Triangular Cooperation instead of the five that are in the network, the researcher was able to better focus her discussion on a specific partnership. The use of Stake (1995)'s instrumental casework methodology where one or more cases are chosen from possible alternatives in order to explore a certain theme worked well for this research project as the researcher was able to look at the five possible case studies from the Norway-Malawi-Zimbabwe network and choose the Trosvik Skole-Bambino School-St. Paul's School partnership to study the mutuality principle. The selection of this case was also targeted as it was readily available and had the characteristics that the researcher was looking for in a partnership.

In regards to the information that was collected, the researcher was most satisfied with the data from the key informants and partnership leaders. The information was rich in content and very meaningful. The researcher however felt that some of the data from the committee members was in some instances 'rehearsed and safe'. This was however not in all cases and the analyzed data drew a pretty conclusive picture of the partnership in light of the concepts under study.

Finally, looking at this partnership in light of the conceptualizations of partnerships by Kingsley and Waschak (2005), it may fall under the view of partnerships as agreements where important elements include the delivery of agreed activities, projects or programs. This is contrary to how the researcher had previously categorized Triangular Cooperation (as either process or venue) as based on Triangular Cooperation literature in Chapter 2. The findings also found that in this partnership at least, the views by different authors that the conceptualization of partnerships as a venue is a seemingly unattainable ideal proved to be true.

Overall then, the researcher would like to make recommendations on the policy and practice of Triangular Cooperation, recommendations for improvement of the partnership under study and for further studies on this topic. On matters of policy and practice of Triangular Cooperation, the researcher would also like to make the following recommendations. The importance of reliable means of communication for all partners was clear in this report. Partners when embarking on any form of cooperation should consider this and find ways of ensuring that the communication needs of all partners are met and that whatever communication options are decided upon, all partners should have adequate access bearing in mind the associated costs. The study findings also indicate that the donor partner is still a very central actor in this form of cooperation. However, there is still need for concerted

efforts from this partner to engage the other partners more in practice for more sustainable partnerships.

In regard to this particular partnership, the researcher had some recommendations that could positively impact it:

- a) The issue of lack of involvement of the committee members in any level of decision making could be greatly improved for the greater good of the partnership. This would improve the ownership of the project by the pivotal and beneficiary partners. These committee members are most involved in the implementation of the project and may be able to contribute towards more achievement of goals since this was an area that was lacking in the partnership.
- b) The partnership should consider a review of the levels of participation and inclusion of all partners if the goal is to still maintain this Triangular Cooperation. This is because the researcher noted the closer relationship between the two South schools at the exclusion of the North school. This could lead to a breakup of the partnership in the near future. The reason for this close relation could be a sign of solidarity among the two schools that feel they have a weaker voice in the partnership. If this is truly the case, the system of partnership should change to address this and increase participation and inclusivity.

This partnership does present a lot of potential for positive transformation of the schools involved and especially in the South. However, they also face a lot of challenges. Some of these challenges are a result of low mutuality relations among the partners which seem to have a negative influence on the implementation of the partnership.

5.2.1: Contribution to development studies

In Chapter One of this paper, the researcher noted that one of the expected contributions of this study is to the academic knowledge base on Triangular Cooperation. In this regard, the researcher recommends the following topics for possible future research. The research findings on the link between the partnership resource contribution system, mutuality and the effectiveness of the partnership were not conclusive. Literature and the key informants allude to the fact that this is a big determinant of mutuality while in regard to the effectiveness of the partnership, the issue that emerged was not so much who contributed what, but the sufficiency of these resources. This is an area that could be explored further in research.

An area that was also critical but did not have conclusive findings was on the relationship between goal achievement as an indicator of partnership effectiveness and the mutuality of the partnership. The findings did not show any direct link between any of the indicators of mutuality and this particular effectiveness indicator. Whether these findings are unique to this partnership or not is something worth further research. The strength of the individual mutuality indicators is another recommended area for further research. The researcher noticed that mutual accountability had the most direct linkages with indicators and characteristics of an effective partnership. Does this mean that it is the strongest mutuality indicator?

This study was based on the dependency theory of development. Dependency theorists view South-south and North-South cooperation as being in opposite ends of the spectrum. Triangular Cooperation is somewhat a go-between these two forms of cooperation. The study does seem to confirm this theory of development. The findings show that though this form of cooperation has mutuality as one of its principles, in practice, its realization in full was not observed. The same issues highlighted in North-South like partnership resources being unidirectional applied to the partnership under study. However, though the North partner as per the findings still had a stronger voice in this partnership, the communication was far from unidirectional. Additionally, the increased closeness of the South partner could be a reaction of the two partners' displeasure of the subtle dominance of the North partner. The two South schools may see South-South cooperation as possible way of having more say in determining their development agenda as per the views of neo-Marxist theorists as cited by Jules and Silva (2008). A possible future scenario would be the formation of another partnership that only involved the two South schools. The findings also point to an agreement with the characteristics attributed to this theory (Ferraro, 1996). The North school appears to be the dominant partner while the two South schools are the dependents. The nature of relationships among partners is indeed dynamic with the patterns of interactions between the North and South partners appearing as unequal. The two South schools also do rely on the participation of the North school in the partnership even if it is mostly for funding while it seems its role in exchange and sharing of ideas is lesser.

Development Studies examines the practices, policies and theories associated with inequalities in world development. Development Cooperation is a path to development that countries undertake. This paper sought to contribute to the academic knowledge base on Triangular Cooperation which is a form of Development Cooperation. Based on what Development Studies is and what it endeavours to achieve,

this paper offers its contribution in terms of creating better understanding the practice of Triangular Cooperation and particularly in the education sector. The study focused on the processes of partnership and the relationships among the three partners in a bid to better understand how this processes and relationships affect the effectiveness of partnership and hence their sustainability and viability. This study shed light on the complexities of relationships between partner institutions that are on a different development footing and how these differences play out in the quest for development. Though this was a one case study research project and the findings cannot be generalised to apply to all Triangular Cooperation partnerships, they do provide a starting point for analysing these kinds of partnerships. These findings combined with further research on this topic and other empirical literature on the same will provide a more holistic picture of the practice of Triangular Cooperation in the education sector and hence a broader base of academic knowledge for use in Development studies.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Guide for Key Informants

The purpose of this interview is to get expert opinion and information regarding the effectiveness of development cooperation partnerships and more specifically, Triangular Cooperation partnerships vis-à-vis the mutuality of the partnership. The information you provide will be used as part of a Master's Research Project from the Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi. All information gathered will be kept confidential. The identity of individuals' specific comments and answers will not be included in the research report.

Part A: General Information

Organization/Institution: _____

Name of respondent: _____

Designation of respondent: _____

Date of interview: _____

Interview Questions

Part B: Approach to partnership, mutuality in partnerships and their effectiveness

Approach to partnership

1. What is your experience in regard to Triangular Cooperation?
2. What is your understanding of Triangular Development Cooperation?
3. In your experience, are all partnerships guided by well formulated agreements among the partners? *(Follow up questions)*
4. Why do countries or institutions engage in such partnerships? *(Follow up questions)*

Mutuality in Partnerships

5. Of the following aspects of mutuality, (inclusivity and participation, communication and coordination, resources and mutual accountability) which one do you deem to be most important for an effective partnership? *(Follow up questions)*
6. In practice, is it realistic to expect the realization of all these aspects in a partnership? *(Follow up questions)*
7. In your opinion, does the realization of all these aspects make a partnership effective? *(Follow up questions)*

8. In existing partnerships, would you say that there are differences in the nature of relationships between the partners e.g. between the North partner and pivotal/ beneficiary and between the two South countries? Does this have a bearing on the implementation of the partnership?
9. Does the issue of resources have a bearing of this form of cooperation in practice?
10. How important is it for a partnership to have mutual accountability systems in place? (*Probe further*)
11. How important is mutuality in the practice of triangular development cooperation?

Partnership effectiveness

12. What criteria would you use to judge the effectiveness of a triangular partnership?
13. How important is a positive attitude among the partners towards each other in the practice of triangular cooperation? (*Follow up questions*)
14. Do the partners' views of the partnership have a bearing on its effectiveness? (*Follow up questions*)
15. Goal achievement is an indicator of an effective partnership. How important is it in comparison to the other indicator of partner satisfaction? (*Follow up questions*)
16. What kinds of concerns regarding the partnership are partners likely have in a triangular cooperation?

Appendix 2: Interview Guide for Partnership Leaders

The purpose of this interview is to get expert opinion and information regarding the effectiveness of development cooperation partnerships and more specifically, Triangular Cooperation partnerships vis-à-vis the mutuality of the partnership. The information you provide will be used as part of a Master's Research Project from the Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi. All information gathered will be kept confidential. The identity of individuals' specific comments and answers will not be included in the research report.

General Information

Name of Institution: _____

Name of Partnership: _____

Partner(s): _____

Part A: Approach to partnership

1. What is your role in the partnership?

2. How long have you been involved in the partnership?
3. What is the organizational structure of this partnership?
4. What are the main characteristics of this partnership? (*partners, actors, sector of cooperation*)
5. What are the main goals for joining the partnership? (*Purpose and motivations*)
6. What activities have you undertaken to achieve these goals?
7. Do you and your partners follow specific guidelines or procedures for this partnership? (Follow-up: if yes, which are they? If no, how do you run the partnership?)
8. Have things changed in the partnership approach over the years of cooperation? (*Follow up questions*)
9. Which were the most important preconditions that determined the formation of this partnership?
10. What is the nature of your school's participation in this partnership (*how do you participate and what do you do*)
11. What is your school's role in this partnership?

Part B: Mutuality and Effectiveness of the partnership

Mutuality of the partnership

12. Who came up with the idea of this partnership? (*If not you, how did you become involved?*)
13. Were you and your partners involved in another partnership prior to this? *If yes, please explain*
14. How were you involved in the partnership formation process?
15. Describe the partnership formation process: who was involved, the resulting documents, who wrote up the document etc.
16. Do you have a say in how the partnership works and what is to be done? (*Follow-up questions*)
17. How are agendas set? (*Who decides what is to be done*)
18. How often do you and your partners communicate regarding the partnership?
19. Which is the most common mode of communication? (*Follow-up questions, is it readily accessible to you?, If not, which mode would you most prefer?*)
20. Who initiates the conversations most times?

21. Which partner do you communicate with most?
22. Is there a central person who coordinates the communication process? (*Follow-up questions, who is this?*)
23. To what extent would you say that you get the information you need when you need it from either of the partners?
24. What has been your school's contribution to this partnership? (In-kind and in-cash)
25. Does this partnership have a resource contribution and sharing agreement?
26. Who contributes the most resources? (*Follow-up questions*)
27. Are you satisfied with the resource contributions (time, finances, people) of the other partners?
28. Do you do any reporting regarding the partnership activities? What tools of reporting do you use? Who do you report to? What do you report about?
29. Does your school assess and review the implementation and outcomes of this partnership? (*If yes, how does the school do this? (Please share any review documents or reports you may have)*)
30. Have you and your partners ever done any joint partnership assessment? *If yes, please give details*
31. Do you get requests for partnership activity reports and updates from any of the other partners? If yes, which partner is this?
32. Do you ever request for partnership activity reports and updates from any of the other partners? If yes, which partner is this?
33. From your school's perspective, what are the advantages or benefits of engaging in this partnership?

Effectiveness of the partnership

34. In your view, what makes for an effective partnership? *Follow-up question- do you think this partnership is effective?*
35. To what extent have the goals mentioned above been achieved on time and in-budget?
36. What factors influence the achievement or non-achievement of these goals?
37. How do you measure the success of the partnership activities mentioned above? (*Follow up- do you use specific monitoring and evaluation guidelines to ensure effectiveness?*)
38. To what extent do you trust your partners to honour the partnership agreement?

39. How has the partnership benefited your school?
40. How would you compare your relationship with the other two partners? (*Followed by probing and follow up questions*)
41. What is your perception of this partnership?
42. Would you say this partnership is working?
43. From your school's perspective what are the main challenges to engaging in this partnership (*Concerns*)

Appendix 3: Semi-structured questionnaire for partnership committee members

The purpose of this interview is to get your opinion and information regarding the effectiveness of development cooperation partnerships and more specifically, Triangular Cooperation partnerships vis-à-vis the mutuality of the partnership. The information you provide will be used as part of a Master's Research Project from the Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi. All information gathered will be kept confidential. The identity of individuals' specific comments and answers will not be included in the research report.

Part A: General Information

Name of Institution: _____
 Name of Partnership: _____
 Role in the partnership: _____

Part B: Mutuality and Partnership effectiveness

1. How long have you been involved in the partnership?
2. What is your role in the partnership?

Mutuality of the partnership

3. Did you have a say in setting the agenda and deciding on the partnership activities?
4. How are decisions made regarding the partnership?
5. Is there a particular person in charge of coordinating the partnership?
6. Do you ever communicate with other participants regarding the partnership?
7. On average, who initiates this communication?
8. Do you feel that your partners honour the partnership agreement in regard to resource contribution and commitment to activities?
9. What types of resources does your school contribute to the partnership?
10. What resources do your partners contribute to the partnership?
11. Are you involved in accounting for the use of resources?
12. Are your partners expected to do the same?

Partnership effectiveness

13. Are you familiar with the goals of this partnership?
14. Have these goals been achieved?
15. In your opinion, what factors have contributed to the achievement of non-achievement of these goals?
16. What is your opinion regarding your two partners?
17. What is your perception of this partnership?
18. Do you think this partnership is working? (*Explain your answer*)
19. What are some of your concerns in regard to the partnership?
20. What makes an effective partnership?
21. Do you think this partnership is effective? (*Explain your answer*)

Appendix 4: Field Notes Guide for Partnership Reports Analysis

Name of Institution _____

Names of partner institutions _____

Points to note:

1. Presence of partnership reports
2. Number of reports written since this partnership started
3. Who writes the report (*rank and role*)
4. Format of report (*similar format? who decides on the report format?*)
5. Frequency of writing partnership reports
6. Content of the report