



Building Local Networks for Integrated Agribusiness Development

Learning Module Series

Module 3: Brokering in Value Chain partnerships	Page 1
Module 3: Reference Sheets	Page 23
Module 3: Exercises	Page 37



This learning module series is based on ICRA's 30+ years of knowledge and expertise on functional capacity strengthening in agriculture and is produced by ICRA within the framework of the 2SCALE programme during 2012–2017. 2SCALE – "Toward Sustainable Clusters in Agribusiness through Learning in Entrepreneurship" – is implemented by a consortium of IFDC, BoPinc and ICRA and funded by the Dutch government (www.2scale.org).

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Module 3: Brokering in value chain partnerships

Foreword

This module on brokering builds on Module 2 which was about building business relationships. It deepens the analysis of roles to be played in facilitating the initiation of partnerships and further development within and beyond the agribusiness clusters. This module highlights the diversity of types, roles and positions of brokers in relation to facilitating partnerships and support. Brokers' skills, attitudes and qualities are also analysed.

In the scientific and development community, the concepts of 'broker' and 'brokering' have been developed in relation to multi-stakeholder processes. In particular, the Partnership Brokers Association (PBA, website <http://www.partnershipbrokers.org>) initiated by Roy Tennison (leader in the development of the concept) proposes to train people whose role is very similar to the role of agribusiness coaches and facilitator-mentors, for whom this module is meant. The module and the reference documents have been largely inspired by PBA publications, adapted to the ABC context.

About this module

Learning objectives

At the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Explain the concept of brokering
- Identify the context in which brokering can be relevant
- Specify the different roles to be played by a broker, especially by a coach working with agribusiness clusters
- Identify the different types of brokers and related brokering challenges
- Identify relevant brokering activities within a given partnership context
- Identify the skills and qualities required of brokers, and specify the tools that a broker can use
- Assess the best coach qualifications for a given situation and reflect upon the relevant attitude needed

Proposed outline of the sessions

The workshop comprises seven sessions, including introduction (Session 0) and workshop assessment. Session 1 aims at getting a common understanding of what we mean concretely when speaking of brokers and brokering. In Session 2, the domains of brokering and the different ways to broker are analysed more in depth and a first list of some concrete

MODULE 3

brokering activities is established. Session 3 deals with the different types of brokers and how they fit within the 2SCALE framework. In Session 4, some best practices and recommendations for brokering are identified, as well as the main qualifications for being a good broker. In Session 5, the participants prepare the fieldwork assignment related to this workshop – which is a reflection of the possible application of what was learnt – to the specific partnerships they are supporting.

Please note that the Time indications are not set in stone. Depending on the context, it might take more or less time.

Session title	Session activities	Time involved
Session 0: Introduction to this module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop objectives and programme 	About 1/2 a day
Session 1: What is brokering?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorm Exercise 1: Personal experiences of brokering Presentations / Plenary discussion 	
Session 2: Brokering context and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch video: (40:27 minutes) Exercise 2: Identifying brokering actions in the film Plenary discussion Facilitator wrap-up 	About 1/2 a day
Session 3: Broker positions and types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator presentation: Introduction on types of brokers Watch video: The rabbit cluster (11:24 minutes) followed by plenary brainstorm Exercise 3: Advantages & disadvantages of different broker-partner relationships Plenary discussion Exercise 4: Typology of 2Scale coaches from a brokering point of view 	About 1/2 a day
Session 4: Broke skills and attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorm Exercise 5: Role play – Brokering archetypes Plenary Discussion 	About 1/2 a day
Session 5: Preparation of the TOR for field coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plenary review Individual preparation 	About 1/2 a day
Session 6: Workshop assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of workshop 	30-60 minutes

Session 0: Introduction to the workshop

Introduction

This short introductory session tends to provide some time for the participants to get to know each other and to develop some first reflections on the topic. Generally the participants will know each other from previous workshops and therefore, this introduction can be limited to some initial review of the participants understanding of the topic, their expectations and worries, and agreement on the workshop objectives and programme.

Learning objectives

At the end of the session the participants will be able to:

- Apprehend each other's expectations and worries about the workshop
- Understand the workshop objectives and relevance of the sessions

Procedure

List of tools/equipment required

- Flip chart, markers
- Coloured cards for expectations and worries
- Sticky tack

1. **Round of introductions:** If necessary, ask participants to introduce themselves, the institution they are working for (Lead firm...), and the cluster(s) they are supporting. Note all information down on a flipchart on the wall (visible for all).
2. **Participants brainstorm on expectations and worries:** Ask participants to write down their expectations and worries on coloured cards; use green cards for expectations and red for worries. Summarise and group these expectations and worries and hang them out on a flip chart on the wall so they can be seen during the whole workshop.
3. **Facilitator-mentor explains objectives and program sessions of the workshop:** the concept and context of; brokering roles, types of brokers and brokering activities and how these relate to the ABC context.
4. **Reflection Diary:** Introduce the idea of keeping a reflection diary in which each participant writes down his/her reflections of the day using a standard format, indication what was done, interesting, important and applicable (see Introduction; Annex 1).

MODULE 3

Session 1: What is brokering?

Introduction

In the last few years, the terms ‘brokering’ and ‘broker’ are used more and more often in the development context. However, what these concepts mean is not always clear.

Nevertheless, many development practitioners working with multi-stakeholder partnerships (such as ABCs) have been exposed to, or have already implemented brokering activities. In this session, we will start by raising awareness among participants that brokering is not new for them and to share their experiences of it.

Learning objectives

At the end of the session the participants will be able to:

- Specify what brokering is about
- Identify relevant contexts for brokering

Procedure

List of tools/equipment required

- Cards, markers
- Tape - or Pins and a Pin board
- Flip chart sheets

Step 1: What are we talking about?

1. **Plenary brainstorm on cards:** Start the session by asking the participants to write on cards key words that they attach to broker and brokering. Hang the cards up and classify them into different ‘areas’ of brokering.
2. **Discuss and summarise** what the terms mean.

Advice for the facilitator

Key words could be: linkages, relationships, partnership, groups, individuals, organisations, facilitation, getting in touch, innovation, coordination, etc.

For brokering within the ABC framework you could add: coaches, BSS, internal relations within the ABCs, external relations, etc.

Working with francophone coaches, it not easy to find an acceptable translation of ‘brokering’ and ‘broker’. We propose to use ‘periphrases’ such as ‘*médiateur en partenariat*’ for broker and ‘*intermédiation*’ and/or ‘*constitution de réseaux*’ for brokering, but eventually, to agree with participants on using the English terminology!

Step 2: Sharing experiences

1. **Group exercise:** Divide the group into pairs and ask each pair to exchange about their concrete experiences with brokering. See **Exercise 1**.
2. **Presentation in plenary:** Ask participants to select one brokering case story for presentation
As people present, **synthesise** the stories in the form of key words into the table below (on flip chart paper).

Brokering case story	Major topic (what?)	Need/usefulness (context)	For whom?	By whom?
1.				
2.				
3.				
...				

3. **Plenary discussion:** Ask the participants what they think about the following questions:
 - In which 'context' is brokering useful or even necessary?
 - For whom?
 - For what?
 - By whom?
4. **Plenary conclusion:** come back to the key words that came out of the earlier brainstorm in relation to the stories (see Step 1). Add any key words that did not come out of the earlier discussion specific to the ABC framework (e.g. coach, coaching, champion, public-private partnership, cluster, business, inclusiveness, etc.)

Advice for the facilitator

What should come out of this discussion is that brokering is necessary/useful when there are different actors involved (or related to it) in a collective process (short or longer term) in which the actors do not know each other sufficiently well, or if they are not working together in an efficient/good way.

Brokering occurs when an actor (individual or group) within a collective process feels the need and decides either to be the broker, or to look for someone else (for free or paid), because they are convinced that a broker will help them towards a better functioning process.

Brokering should be useful (and found to be necessary?) to all persons involved/interested in the process.

Additional reading

- **Reference Sheet M3/1:** Broker's role and activities.

MODULE 3

Session 2: Brokering context and activity areas

Introduction

Having reached a common understanding of what brokering is in general, and being convinced that the concept is relevant for ABCs, the next step is to deepen the reflection on the importance of brokering in this framework, how it can be put in practice and by whom.

Learning objectives

At the end of the session the participants will be able to:

- Understand that brokering is always a matter of facilitating relationships
- Understand that coaches are in a central position to broker for ABC actors and/or between ABC actors (though they are not the only ones to broker)
- Identify who brokers for what, how, and at what stage in a certain ABC/PPP
- Identify a first list of activities for brokering

Procedure

List of tools/equipment required

- Flip chart sheets, markers
- Video viewing equipment for the different groups
- Educational video on USB: 'Coaching and Collaboration' (see also web link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQIBJlriDbc>)

Step 1: Introducing the context for brokering

1. **Plenary viewing:** Watch the video 'Coaching and Collaboration'
2. **Group exercise:** Split the participants into groups to work on Exercise 2, which consists of identifying the context in which brokering took place including the needs for brokering and/or the issues being handled, and the roles being played by brokers. The groups will first watch again the video and where needed select specific sections of the video to come to a good level of understanding.
3. **Plenary presentation:** Ask one group to present the findings in plenary, and have the others comment and add according to their findings. Summarise by highlighting that in this specific case, brokering intervened at different stages of the ABC case story and that various persons, in different positions, played the role of broker:
 - Sometimes within the ABC – in particular the champion during the initial stage and thereafter the coach
 - Sometimes outside the ABC - e.g. when FUPRO plays the brokering role vis-à-vis AFDIAlso mention that brokering sometimes comes as a reaction to an external 'stimulus' and other times as an initiative from inside.

MODULE 3

Advice for the facilitator

There are various moments where you can see brokering in the video “Coaching and Collaboration” and different persons doing that job:

- Getting in touch with Fludor: Lionel (at that time the UCPZ president) when cotton went bad
- Getting idea from AFDI (French NGO) to process soya beans: Lionel/UCP-Z (through FUPRO that can also be considered to be playing the brokering role)
- Negotiating support from AFDI to train the women processors: Lionel/ UCP-Z (as a FUPRO member)
- Making warrantage arrangements with the Bank for UCPS-Z: an unnamed person (probably a staff member jointly with a representative?)
- Looking for markets: Elise herself, others?
- Establishing linkages with Solange: ...? Who? When? Why?
- Facilitating relationships within the ABC: Coach (Roland)

For each of the lines, be sure that the following questions are addressed:

- What was the context for brokering or what motivated the brokering action?
- What was the problem to be solved?
- Where did the idea come from?

Sometimes the answer is not specified in the video, but the participants must understand that brokering does not come out of the blue. It is not a matter of somebody waking up and saying: “I’m going to broker today”, there has to be a need for brokering (as much as brokering is not for free, at least in terms of time to be spent).

Step 2: Defining brokering activity areas

1. **Plenary exercise:** Ask the participants to list activities that have been implemented by the different brokers in the video *Coaching and Collaboration*. Specifically, for each of the brokers that have been listed in the table of Exercise 2, ask the participants to list:
 - Concrete activities that have been implemented, as specified in the video
 - Any other activities that might have been carried out (but were not mentioned in the video) or that they think would be relevant/useful (e.g. when the partnership will evolve)

Broker	Concrete activity (as shown in the film)	Any other relevant activity
Lionel	- - -	- - -
Roland	- - -	- - -

Elise		
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Advice for the facilitator

Examples of activities per broker:

Lionel

- Identifying possibilities for selling soybeans
- Getting in touch with Fludor – asking for an appointment
- Meeting with Fludor decision makers – making use of personal contacts or not, probably several times
- Negotiating price and all other (e.g. seed) contractual arrangements
- Getting information from AFDI about soya processing experience in Togo: probably no specific activity, but Lionel is always attentive to new ideas when discussing with FUPRO partners
- Negotiating support from AFDI to train the women processors
- Developing a proposal
- Submit the request to AFDI
- Warrantage arrangements with the Bank – organising and attending training on warrantage (or hearing about it)
- Getting in touch with the usual bank of UCP
- Developing a specific project
- Looking for markets: moving to marketplaces, advertising (activating networks, using flyers or posters, etc.)

Roland

- Facilitating relationships within the ABC – through regular meetings
- Capacity strengthening events: training, coaching...
- Identifying issues and stimulating innovative ways of processing
- Getting in touch with new potential cluster actors (the women traders,...)
- Etc.

2. **Plenary presentation by facilitator:** present a classification of the activities into 6 brokering activity areas:
 1. Facilitating interaction between different actors
 2. Managing knowledge and information (bringing in new ideas/concepts, capacity strengthening)
 3. Simulating innovation (new or improved practices)
 4. Coordinating action (including common analysis/understanding, planning, and concrete action)
 5. Lobbying and networking (identifying and getting in touch with potential partners; attending meetings, reading newspapers, attending events (fairs))
 6. Negotiating external backing and support (discussing with people, traveling, etc.)

MODULE 3

3. **End** by indicating the specific 'area' for each activity on the list.

Additional reading

- Reference Sheet M3/2: Brokering in different phases of the partnering cycle

Session 3: Broker positions and types

Introduction

By now, the participants should have a good picture of the activities potentially included in brokering. The next question is then to analyse who (person and institution) can implement these activities. There is, in fact, not a unique type of broker: the roles to be played by the broker and the position of the broker vis-à-vis the partnership they are working for may vary and this has implications on the way of implementing the work.

Learning objectives

At the end of this session, the participants will be able to:

- Identify different positions of brokers in relation to the supported partnerships
- Assess the advantages/disadvantages of the different positions
- Understand that coaches are the main (but not sole) brokers within an ABC framework, and
- Identify different types of coaches

Procedure

List of tools/equipment required

- Flip chart sheet and markers
- Equipment for video viewing
- Cards and markers for writing key words – tape/pins for hanging them up
- Educational video on USB: Business coaches in action (see also web link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNIVJ2WzJGI>)

Step 1: Defining different types of brokers

1. **Plenary presentation by facilitator:** Begin with a short presentation to introduce the following ideas:

There are mainly two '**positions**' that a broker can take, which are not mutually exclusive:

- The broker can support the management of the daily life of the partnership. This is a rather 'accommodating' or 'reactive' position.
Give the example from the Soya ABC video watched in the previous session: when Roland brings the different actors together to analyse the cluster and identify options for improvement, he plays the role of a **coordinator**.
- The broker can also take a more 'pro-active' position and support the partnership to become more 'sexy' and innovative.
State that there are plenty of examples from the video: when Lionel brings in new ideas – from cotton to soybeans, and from a Fludor market to women processors and local market. In these, Lionel plays the role of a **pioneer**.

MODULE 3

Explain that for both positions, the broker can have different **relationships with the partners**. They can be an:

- **‘Internal’ broker**, i.e. from ‘inside’ the cluster or partnership and so be a member of one of the actors (as in the case of the film)¹;
- **‘External’ broker**, contracted or appointed from outside the cluster/partnership to perform the role of broker.

2. **Continue presentation:** Then present the table shown in Figure 1 below (either as Powerpoint slide – or written on a flip chart sheet beforehand), explaining that this brings us to the following ‘theoretical’ types of brokers as a function of their position and their relationship to the partners.

It is important to also note that, as is the case for any typology, the types of brokers are not mutually exclusive – and a broker can combine the two different positions at different moments in time. Being an internal broker does not exclude being a facilitator supporting the establishment of relationships; and vice versa, being an external broker does not exclude being a coordinator of activities.

	External broker		
Reactive mandate	Animator Typically an independent consultant or external organisation appointed by the partnership to implement decisions in its behalf	Pioneer Typically an independent consultant or external organisation who has seeded the idea or may even have initiated the partnership	Proactive mandate
	Coordinator Typically a member of staff or internal unit working within one of the partner organisations and assigned a partnership coordination role	Innovator Typically a member of staff or internal unit working within one of the partner organisations tasked to take initiative in creating and building the partnership	
	Internal broker		

Figure 1: Types of brokers and their positions/mandates

Advice for the facilitator

Note the following when referring to the ‘Coaching and collaboration’ video:

- In Zogbodomey the brokers have been mainly ‘insiders’: Lionel, when he was president of UCP-Z, Elise, Roland, as staff of UCP-Z (although Roland was not a permanent one – see note above)
- Sometimes outsiders may have also played a role (e.g. coaches to set up and develop the warrantage system)
- According to the stage of the partnership, the innovative dimension has been more or less present. It is the normal life of a partnership to alternate periods of innovation and ‘moving’ with periods of consolidation (which does not imply that nothing happens).

3. **Plenary video viewing:** If there is enough time, propose to watch another short **video Business coaches in action**, specifically the one related to the **Rabbit cluster**.
4. **Plenary discussion:** Following the viewing, ask the participants in plenary to identify:
 - Who is playing a brokering role?
 - What are the specific activities?
 - Where to place these activities within the broker typology table?

Advice for the facilitator

Possible answers:

- At the beginning of the video, Konnon (2SCALE trainer) is talking of the need for supporting multi-actor relationship building and maintenance; this role is played by the coach, so the coach is the animator.
- Then, providing information is mentioned (about IMF in particular): the NGO Bouge is doing that through the coach. This is a pioneer position.
- One producer speaks of getting in touch with clients, through another producer who is already more advanced in marketing. This last one can be seen as an innovator.

5. **Plenary wrap-up:** conclude by emphasizing that in the case of the *Coaching and Coordination* soybean video, the brokering roles have mainly been played by internal actors (either individuals or organisations) within the ABC (coordinators and innovators) whereas, in the case of the Rabbit cluster video, the brokering roles have mainly been played by an external person (the coach) and the Business Support Service organisation (the NGO Bouge) to which the coach belongs. In this case, the brokers are rather animators and/or pioneers.

Step 2: Specifying the advantages and disadvantages of different configurations

1. **Group work:** Start with **Exercise 3**. Divide the participants into 4 groups. The exercise consists of identifying advantages and disadvantages of the different types of coaches. Each group should come with a flip chart sheet with the following table, to present to the rest of the group.
2. **Plenary presentations by group & discussion:** Display the table from Exercise 3 on the wall (projection or as flip chart sheet). Ask each group present its findings for each type of broker, followed by a discussion.

	Advantages	Disadvantages	Notes
Coordinator			
Innovator			
Pioneer			

MODULE 3

Animator			

Advice for the facilitator

It may be good to prepare a list of examples taken from the close context of the participants in case no example comes out for a specific issue, but do not spend too much time on the preparation.

The discussion should make clear to the participants that there is not a right or wrong answer as each situation presents its own advantages and disadvantages. It is important, however, to be aware of the risks of being in one or the other situation, to support the coaches in minimising the inconveniences and make the most of specific opportunities.

3. **Plenary conclusion:** Remind the participants that the advantages and/or disadvantages regarding the efficiency of a broker or coach have to be considered from an ABC point of view. This means that advantages/disadvantages are related to:
 - More or less easy relations with the different stakeholders
 - Issues of trust
 - Means available (logistics, access to information, network)
 - Potential support and capacity strengthening that can be mobilised
 - Sustainability of the position, etc.

Step 3 Types of coaches within the ABC framework

1. **Plenary brainstorm:** Start by asking the participants to characterise and classify coaches that exist within the ABC framework, according to their knowledge and based on what they have seen in the films. Propose some 'criteria' to characterise/classify, like
 - Inside vs outside the cluster
 - Individuals or staff of organisations
 - Source of funding
 - Type of brokering provided,
 -
2. **Plenary exercise with cards:** Distribute cards for the participants to write key words for characterising coaches.
 - When having collected all cards, sort and group them while hanging them up.

Advice for the facilitator

Possible criteria:

- Where they are from (within, outside the cluster)?
- What is their status: consultant, permanent staff?
- Are they working as an individual, or representing an organisation?
- Paid by whom, or who is paying for what?
- What type of brokering do they provide (punctual, mid-term, long-term), reactive or proactive
- Between which parties are they brokering?
- Are they specialised or do they carry many hats?
- What has been their role in the partnership initiation (involved since the beginning or not, promoting the initial idea ...)?

3. Ask the participants to specify, among these criteria, what are the ones that crosscut with the broker types, as defined above.
4. **Group exercise:** Introduce **Exercise 4** that allows the participants to reflect on their own case and see the potential advantages and disadvantages of their 'organisational' position in terms of brokering.
 - Begin with an individual reflection to position him/herself in a typology table.
 - Then groups are constituted according to which 'type' they belong to (if too few types are represented, ask participants to take the position of one of the organisation groupings – either NGO, private consultant, FO or Firm) and give time for groups to reflect before presenting their results in plenary.

Advice for the facilitator

At this stage, it has to be clear to the participants that the role of the coach is mainly a matter of brokering – though not the only one. As a coach it is important to have the means to be efficient in doing the job.

Once again, there is no "good answer" nor a standard list to think about, but it is useful for the coaches to think of their own position within the diversity of possible situations, to help them look from a distance to the advantages/disadvantages of it.

Additional reading

- Reference sheet M3/3: Broker's position, broker's profile

MODULE 3

Session 4: Broker skills and attitudes

Introduction

Session 3 made clear that not all brokers are in the same position and that this may influence their way of brokering. Beyond the position of the broker, each person and their behaviour are important to consider. In fact, efficient brokering requires specific skills that are not only a matter of know-how, but also imply relevant attitudes.

Learning objectives

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- List the skills and attitudes of a good broker
- Specify what attitude or characteristic is appropriate to brokers in different situations
- Identify how to possibly adapt the coach's behaviour to optimise advantages and limit inconveniences

Procedure

List of tools/equipment required

- Two sets of coloured cards, and markers
- Pins or masking tape to hang them up with

Step 1 : Dealing with brokering skills and attitudes

1. **Plenary introduction:** Tell the participants that in this session they are going to deal with brokering skills and attitudes. The focus will be mainly on the coach as a broker, knowing that the coach is generally not the only broker in a given ABC partnership. We might therefore refer here and there to brokers that are not necessarily also coaches.
2. **Plenary brainstorm on cards:** Ask the participants to write on cards what they consider to be important skills (1 colour) and attitudes (2nd coloured card) for a good broker. Explain that attitudes are linked to a personal profile. The cards are sorted and put on the wall.

Advice for the facilitator

Not a lot of comments are needed here: just highlight that the perfect broker is a 'five-legged sheep' (in principle that is what should come out of the brainstorm!) with contradictory qualities required.

3. **Group work:** Organise a role play, as explained in **Exercise 5**. The participants review the table presented in the exercise, which presents a list of so-called brokering archetypes, with some of their basic characteristics (attributes and styles). The facilitator checks if everybody understands the exercise well.

Give the groups some time to prepare their role plays.

4. **Plenary performance by groups:** Ask each group to perform their two role plays. After each 'pair of plays', open the floor to comments. Then ask: 'Which of the two gives a better brokering profile, and why?'
5. **Plenary discussion:** After the plays have all been performed, ask the following questions:
 - Do you think that there are any specific skills that can reinforce or bring balance to personal attitudes that may stand in the way?
 - How can a broker move from one archetype (or attitude) to another according to the evolution of the context?
6. **Plenary conclusion:** At the end, bring up the following points:
 - No one person has the perfect competences for brokering, but there are tools and know-how (skills) that can allow them to balance their weaknesses and to adapt to the needs of the partnership at a given moment (the coach should be proactive and adapt to the needs of the situation).
 - It can sometimes be useful to mobilise complementary competences for efficient brokering (e.g. finding other brokers, among the partners or outside - the coach or partners will have to look for such persons).
 - Identifying and selecting a good coach is not an easy matter. It is necessary to reflect on the main needs of the partnership in terms of brokering before appointing somebody (the recruitment of the coach should be dealt with seriously).

Advice for the facilitator

This session is an occasion for the participants to think 'out of the box'. The role play is supposed to stimulate this attitude.

The purpose is to improve and deepen awareness that there is no perfect profile that works in all situations.

Insist on the fact that each group has to imagine how the broker would have implemented their 'task' given their character (which influences the attitude considerably). The idea is to explore how each character can adopt an attitude that allows them to do the job properly. So, the conclusion would be that you have to do your best given 'your' character (and not to show that one character is good and the other one not).

Additional reading

- *Brokering guidebook – Navigating effective sustainable development partnerships, Guidance note 1: appointing a broker pp 19-23; R. Tennyson, 2005.*

PARTNERSHIP BROKER'S PROFILE. Brokering Archetypes, Personal Attributes, Technical Skills & Resources' by Partnership Brokers Association Dec 2011, in :

<http://partnershipbrokers.org/w/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/Partnership-Brokers-Profile.pdf>

MODULE 3

Session 5: Preparation of the TOR for field coaching

Introduction

During this session the participants will review the workshop and identify concepts and tools that are most relevant for application in their 'new' cluster context. This will then form the basis for the design of the Terms of Reference for coaching sessions on this topic.

Learning objectives

At the end of the session, the participants will have a better understanding of the relevance of the different concepts and tools on how to better broker partnerships, and on how to coach and support cluster members in brokering partnerships.

Procedure

List of tools/equipment required

- Paper and writing implements
- Flip chart, markers
- Coloured cards
- Sticky tack, pins or tape – depending on the location

Step 1: Review the sessions

1. **Plenary discussion:** Review the different sessions and tools used during this workshop; for each session, ask the participants to tell:
 - what topics were treated and what tools use?
 - what did you learn?
 - what will be relevant for use and application?

SESSION	TOPIC	WHAT I LEARNT	WHAT WILL BE RELEVANT TO BE APPLIED TO MY CLUSTER
1.			
2.			
...			

Step 2: Preparing terms of reference for field coaching

1. **In plenary:** Explain that preparation for field work will vary according to the previous experience of the coach in *terms of brokering to serve the business partnership they work*

MODULE 3

for. Following this workshop/module, the participants should be able to assess the brokering needs of the partnership (ABC or PPP) they work with, and to see what could be their role as coaches in doing this.

- 2. **Individual work:** Fill in a table similar to the one used in Exercise 2, first detailing brokering actions already implemented in their partnership context, then noting brokering actions that would be useful in future.

	Brokering action	When?	Context/issue	By whom? (Broker)	For whom?
Already implemented					
To consider for future implementation					

If time allows, ask each coach to look more in depth at the ‘by whom’ column, especially for future brokering. When they are the ones who are supposed to broker, they should specify (in one or two lines) the concrete actions that they consider necessary. If relevant, they should also specify the conditions they think are needed for the brokering to be successful.

Session 6: Workshop assessment

Introduction

Did this workshop fit the participants' needs and has it satisfied their expectations? Do they now feel able to train cluster actors in the basic knowledge of brokering partnerships? These are some of the questions this session would like to have answers to.

Objective

With this assessment, the facilitator can find out whether the workshop was appreciated by participants, and will be able to adjust follow-up workshops, if necessary.

Procedures

There are several ways and tools to assess a workshop, from the beginning to its end, and during the sessions.

- **At the beginning of** the workshop: each participant wrote down his/her expectations and worries; these were summarised and hang out on the wall. The facilitator now reviews these and discusses with the participants to what extent the expectations are met and worries are let go.
- **During** the workshop: at the end of each day (even for a 2-day session), the participants were given the opportunity to reflect on what was done during the day in a Reflection Diary. Ask each participant to indicate how well they appreciated each session, why, and if relevant to propose improvements to the content.
-
- **At the end** of the workshop: Ask participants to either in plenary, or individually, to reflect on how they experienced the workshop.
 - One option: At the end of the workshop, ask participants to fill in the following table – to maintain anonymity and confidentiality, either completed individually on sheets to hand in - or putting an 'x' on a flip chart sheet on the wall, and writing comments on cards to be gone through by the facilitator.
 - Another option: This could alternatively be done in plenary if participants feel comfortable enough to speak out.

Session/topics	Good	Average	Poor
S1: What is brokering?			
S2: Brokering context and activities			
S3: Broker positions and types			
S4: Broker skills and attitudes			
S5: Preparation of the TOR for field coaching			
S6: Workshop/module assessment			
Your opinion on the facilitation			

MODULE 3

Give general or specific comments on the workshop			
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Advice to the facilitator

An often recurring issue in a workshop is that time is too short to go through all planned activities. This often affects the time taken for assessment. This final part is very important, however. So, do not forget to assess how it is going at the beginning, during, and at the end of the workshop. This will give you very useful information.

Before starting this session, prepare the synthesis on the participants' expectations.

Reference sheets

The reference sheets here after are extracted from different publications of the Partnership brokers association and especially from the “Brokering Guidebook” edited in 2011 within the Partnering Initiative framework.

We have to keep in mind that the brokering guidebook considers all types of partnership and doesn't focus on agribusiness-oriented partnerships that we work about within the ABC framework.

One of the concepts used in the book is the partnering cycle, which is *“a framework designed to highlight the progression and complexity of a partnership over time. It also provides a basis for understanding the changes in management priorities for the partners as their partnership progresses”* (see Reference sheet 1)

Reference sheet 1: Broker's role and activities

- Who are partnership brokers?
- Defining the broker's role
- Broker's activities

Reference sheet 2: Brokering in different phases of the partnering cycle

Reference sheet 3: Broker's position, broker's profile

- Brokers: Internal or external?
- Brokers: Individuals or organisations?
- Key skills of a broker

Reference sheet 1: Broker's role and activities

Who are partnership brokers?

Partnership brokers are individuals (or organisations) that support multi-stakeholder partnerships at local, national or international levels, enabling them to better achieve their goals.

Partnership brokers:

- Act as change makers. They intervene in a range of ways depending on what is most needed by the partnerships and/or the phase of the partnership in the partnering cycle.
- Are, above all, dedicated to connecting ideas and people to help clarify goals and improve the operations of a partnership.
- Can be expected to be good capacity builders, communicators, facilitators, organisers, process managers, record keepers and more.
- Become redundant when they undertake their roles well, as the partners increasingly carry out the work of the partnership and manage the partnering process themselves.

As well as helping partners to maximise benefits and impact, good brokering can play a significant part in ensuring that a partnership becomes an innovative and productive mechanism for change.

Defining the Broker's role

A broker, according to the dictionary, is a go-between in making relationships (for example, a marriage broker) or a middleman (for example, a stockbroker or an insurance broker). Similarly, a partnership broker operates as an active go-between or intermediary between different organisations and sectors (public, private and civil society) that aim to collaborate as partners in a sustainable development initiative.

A broker may need to adopt a number of different types of behaviours including those of:

- Business manager, keeping the work results-focused
- Record keeper, providing accurate, clear and appropriate communications
- Teacher, raising awareness and building capacity
- Healer, restoring health and well-being to dysfunctional relationships
- Parent, nurturing the partnership to maturity
- Police officer, ensuring that partners are transparent and accountable

Broker's activities

A partnership broker may undertake many different types of activities on behalf of a partnership. These are both specific and non-specific in nature.

Some of the key **non-specific activities** for a broker may include:

- Seeding the idea of potentially partnering with particular actors, policy makers and/or donors – explaining how it can work and how it may be better than alternative approaches
- Inspiring decision makers to follow a multi-sector approach to their sustainable

development efforts

- Building active collaboration between the partners themselves as well as between the partners, other stakeholders and external donors
- Encouraging (and role modelling) the kinds of behaviour that will help the partnership to function effectively and creatively
- Protecting the principles and vision of the partnership

More important for us is to focus on the **specific activities** that contribute to an effective brokering. The partners themselves need to understand and work through the various stages of their particular partnership – and, of course, partners do so (consciously or unconsciously, with or without the benefit of a framework).

Those operating as partnership brokers do have a responsibility to be one step ahead in helping partners to:

- Anticipate what is required to move the partnership forward effectively
- Recognise when they have missed a vital element of the partnering process
- Understand when it is a good time for them to take stock of the partner relationship or
- Know whether or not it is right to change arrangements or direction

Brokers, therefore, need to be well attuned to the different phases of the partnering cycle and to understand clearly how they, in their brokering role, can support the partnering process in different ways during each phase. These phases are represented below schematically, with an indication of when – and in what ways – brokers can play a range of useful roles.



◇ = broker’s potential tasks

Figure 1: The partnering cycle and the broker’s changing roles

Reference sheet 2: Brokering in different phases of the partnering cycle

PHASE I: Scoping & building

THE STORY STARTS...

...with a pre-partnership phase in which a broker may find he/she has to educate others in the idea of partnering. Indeed, it may be quite a challenge for several key stakeholders and potential partners to consider collaborating in activities that have, typically, been the sole responsibility of a single sector.

Where a new approach is unfamiliar, there is a risk of scepticism (at best) and outright hostility (at worst) with which the broker may have to deal with head on as a precursor to even the first stages of partnership building.

The earliest form of scoping, therefore, is to assess how much time will need to be invested in building both an understanding of the potential of a partnering approach and active enthusiasm for the idea.

Broker’s objectives

The objectives of the broker are to:

- Understand the scope and nature of the sustainable development challenge and whether a partnership approach is appropriate or possible within the specific context
- Identify partners and help to build a strong working relationship between them, capable of withstanding difficulties and challenges as their partnership commitments grow
- Explore and agree, with partners, the outline design and development of a project or programme of work

BROKERS' TASKS	NOTES
<p>SCOPING & CONVENING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the development issue (a type of needs analysis) and the key players who are or should be involved • Explore and confirm that a partnering approach is more likely to be successful or appropriate than any possible alternative approach • Arrange / convene meetings with key players including potential partners, other key stakeholders, external donors and policy makers (see Guidance Note 7 on Designing Workshops) 	<p>This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Understanding the nature of the challenge → Gathering information → Consulting with stakeholders → Consulting with potential external resource providers → Helping to build a vision of / for the partnership
<p>PARTNER IDENTIFICATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and confirm which organisations will become partners (and which will be supporters, donors, champions, interested bystanders but not partners) 	<p>This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Identifying potential partners and – if suitable – securing their involvement → Clarifying other non-partner roles → Motivating partners and key others to become

MODULE 3

Brokering in value chain partnerships

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore continuing roles of other (non-partner) key players / stakeholders• Encourage partners to commit resources (particularly their time and authority) to the partnership in its earliest stages	actively engaged and encouraging them to invest time and effort into the partnership
<p>RELATIONSHIP BUILDING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Address any concerns and conflicts of interest• Agree some initial ground rules and operational principles for the partnership• Secure the partners' agreement on project objectives, as well as an outline project design and implementation plan	<p>This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Using every opportunity (meetings and events) to help partners to build their working relationship→ Encouraging and enabling partners to be transparent and open with each other about any (actual or perceived) difficulties→ Pushing partners to making tangible commitments to the project / programme of work

Taking stock

Questions for the broker to consider before partners move into detailed project planning and delivery mode include:

- Are all partners equally committed to the goals and focus of the partnership?
- Which partners are active and which passive in pushing the agenda forward? Does this need adjusting?
- Has a way of working together been achieved that is comfortable and appropriate for all partners?
- Are the partners beginning to operate within the partnership as one body rather than as separate entities?

Not all (obvious or underlying) issues need to be fully resolved by the end of Phase 1, but the broker should feel confident that partners have established a sufficiently robust working relationship to face any future relationship challenges (whether internal or external to the partnership).

How will a broker know whether the partners have a robust working relationship?

Evidence to look for could include:

- Partners working more proactively on behalf of the partnership
- Reliable follow-up by partners on commitments and agreed actions
- Realistic expectations of the partnership, other partners and the broker

Next steps

- Ensure that an initial agreement to collaborate is in place that outlines:
 - A shared goal
 - Shared and specific (to each partner) objectives
 - Commitments and roles for all partners
- Secure buy-in on the project's outline development, management and implementation
- Identify and allocate (internal to the partnership) or appoint (external to the partnership)

a manager for the proposed project

PHASE 2: Managing and maintaining

THE STORY CONTINUES...

Brokers help partners to agree the structure and medium to long-term management of their partnership. Once resources are in place and project details are finalised, the implementation process starts – working to a pre-agreed timetable and (ideally) to specific deliverables. Two things are critical to this phase: excellent communications (both within the partnership and to external stakeholders) and workable governance arrangements. In developing both these key areas, the broker can play an invaluable part.

Broker’s objectives

The objectives of the broker are to:

- To help the partners and project staff to identify resource needs and encourage the partners to commit their own (cash and non-cash) resources to the project
- To help partners to develop (and use) appropriate communications arrangements that will underpin the smooth working of the partnership and ensure it is understood by others
- To ensure that decision-making procedures and governance arrangements are realistic, agreed and adhered to

BROKERS’ TASKS	NOTES
<p>RESOURCE MAPPING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a shared concept of resources that encompasses more than simply cash. • Encourage and support partners (and other supporters) to identify and mobilise (cash and non-cash) resources. • Help partners and project staff understand the importance of sustainable resource mobilisation arrangements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Resources can include: people, equipment, venues, knowledge, contacts and specialist/ technical skills. Partners may need help to understand this and to give proper credit and value to those who contribute non-cash resources to the partnership. → Building resource commitment from the partners themselves is central to building a strong relationship and greater equity between them. → Brokers should also help partners consider from an early stage what is required to build medium to long-term sustainability.
<p>COMMUNICATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to build an integrated and coherent communications strategy for the partnership. • Ensure that partners do not ‘go public’ too early in the life of the partnership and never make inflated claims of its achievements • Ensure that information is agreed by all partners before it is put in the public domain both in relation to the partnership and the partnership’s activities/projects. 	<p>Some key communications questions to consider and discuss with partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Who represents the partnership? → How far does the broker become a spokesperson for the partnership? → How is a communications approach developed, agreed and monitored? → Who are the partnership’s stakeholders and / or audiences?

(Contin'd) BROKERS' TASKS	NOTES
<p>ENSURING GOOD GOVERNANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help partners to work within a double accountability system (e.g. where they are accountable to the individual partner organisations and to each other as a partnership) • Ensure reporting mechanisms and grievance procedures are in place, appropriate and working effectively • Advise on the development of new delivery mechanisms or structures if necessary 	<p>Some key communications questions to consider and discuss with partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → It is all too easy for partnerships to slip into lax reporting and governance arrangements. This may work for a while but is likely to cause friction and bad habits if left unchecked. → The broker may be the one person ideally placed to insist on procedures being followed to ensure transparency, genuine collaboration in decision making and that grievances are dealt with correctly → If it becomes necessary to create a new mechanism for the partnership, the form of governance required will be central to the decision about what kind of mechanism is needed

Taking stock

- Partners have made their own resource contributions willingly, responsibly and imaginatively
- Partners are actively engaged in wider resource procurement activities as deemed necessary
- Longer-term (and sustainable) resource strategies agreed and early indications that they are likely to be both realistic and successful
- Communications strategy in place and agreed at a level with which all partners feel comfortable
- Governance and accountability procedures are agreed, in place and working relatively smoothly
- The broker is now largely supporting (not leading) the partners in all aspects of their working relationship

Possible next steps

There may be times in this phase when the broker needs to:

- Propose to partners that the partnership approach or the project be abandoned (for example, if the external circumstances have changed radically and a partnership-based initiative is no longer relevant, possible or necessary)
- Help the partners manage exits (e.g. of key individuals or partner organisations) from the partnership
- Introduce and help to deliver elements of Phase 3

PHASE 3: Monitoring, reviewing and revising

THE STORY CONTINUES...

It is time to start measuring and reporting on impact and effectiveness, outputs and outcomes. Is the partnership achieving its goals? It may also be time to consider reviewing the partnership. What is the impact of the partnership on the partner organisations? Is it operating as efficiently and effectively as it could? Should the way the partnership is managed be modified or changed more radically? Should one or more of the partners move on and / or new partners be invited to join? It may even be time to make some quite radical changes.

Broker’s objectives

The objectives of the broker are to:

- Ensure continuing good practice and develop a ‘learning culture’ within the partnership
- Focus the partners’ attention on the results and impacts of their collaboration
- Help the partners to navigate any necessary changes

BROKERS’ TASKS	NOTES
<p>ADVISING ON MONITORING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help partners to put in place arrangements for a comprehensive evaluation process (probably using a participative approach involving partners, project staff, beneficiaries and other stakeholders) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Who needs the information on the partnership’s impacts? → How can the evaluation process conform to the requirements of external agencies (e.g. donors) without reducing things to a formulaic approach that fails to capture the more subtle and qualitative outcomes that have derived from a partnership approach? → How external does an evaluation process have to be in order to be accepted as unbiased and objective?
<p>ADVISING ON REVIEWING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help partners review the partnering relationship by assessing and quantifying its value to each of the partner organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → For partners to remain involved in the medium to long term, they will need to know whether or not the partnership is meeting their individual organisational goals. Brokers need to be aware of this (even if partners do not state it openly as an important issue underpinning their commitment) → Brokers may even be the ideal person to facilitate or co-facilitate a review process (if they are by this stage somewhat detached from delivering day to day brokering services)
<p>IMPLEMENTING REVISIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate impacts and review the partnering relationship to yield important information about the health and wellbeing of the partnership and about changes that may be important in making it more efficient, effective and / or sustainable • Help partners to internalise lessons and to agree appropriate revisions to their working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Brokers can help the process by demonstrating a willingness to accept critical as well as positive findings from evaluations and reviews themselves → They may be ideally placed to ask the partners challenging follow-up questions as a way of getting them to focus on new priorities and to agree to any changes that are deemed necessary

practices and project implementation	→ Brokers see any revisions to the partnership or its project as a useful process for reviewing their own role and also for securing partner agreement to make appropriate changes in brokering practices
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Taking stock

This phase should reveal:

- The relative value of the partnership approach (as opposed to any other) and how successfully the partnership has achieved effective impacts and sustainable outcomes.
- Where any adjustments need to be made in order for the partnership and/or the project to be more effective and whether (or not) the partners are flexible enough to make these adjustments willingly.
- Evidence that the partners are becoming more independent of the broker – increasingly sharing the broker’s tasks between themselves – and that the broker’s role has moved to that of coach (see Guidance Note 8: Broker as Coach).

Next steps

Time to focus more seriously on the longer-term relationship. At some stage in phases 2 and 3 brokers will consider with partners whether they see their working relationship continuing indefinitely and / or whether it is time to move on – either by moving apart or by taking on new challenges. Information on the impacts and effectiveness of the partnership to date as well as reviews of the value of the relationship will be critical in informing any decision about moving on (in whatever direction).

PHASE 4: Sustaining outcomes

THE STORY CONCLUDES...

By this stage, the most important consideration will be the issue of sustaining outcomes rather than sustaining the partnership for its own sake. It may be that the partners have completed their most important task – creating an innovative, cross-sectoral approach to a critical development issue – and that they can disband the partnership in full confidence that the programme of work will continue.

It may be that the partners do decide to keep the partnership in place but to tackle new challenges.

Or it may be that the partners remain involved but through a renegotiated relationship and a new delivery mechanism.

Broker’s objectives

The objectives of the broker are to:

- To help the partners consider the long-term options for the partnership and to support the partners in selecting and implementing the most appropriate next steps
- To ensure that resources and delivery mechanisms are in place – either to complete the project or to support and sustain it over the long term
- To implement an exit strategy for themselves as brokers

BROKERS' TASKS	NOTES
<p>MANAGING CLOSURE A partnership may have always been intended to be temporary – designed essentially to develop and test out a new approach to an old problem. In this case, the transfer of activities to a longer-term delivery system and the termination of the partnership will be a cause for celebration and congratulations. On the other hand, a partnership may be terminated because it has failed – this is likely to involve considerable disappointment and even anger and will need skilful and sensitive management to minimise damage.</p>	<p>The tendency is to invest significant time, energy and skill into partnership building, but the closure of the partnership (for whatever reason) requires equal attention. This may be a point at which an internal broker is identified from within the partnership or an external broker is brought in specifically to help partners manage the closure process. It is important to ensure that all things are finished and that there are no loose ends. It is also important that all agree on how the closure is presented both internally (to the various partner organisations) and externally (to all other stakeholders, donors or the general public). Wherever possible, underline the partnership's achievements and leave a clear picture of (at least) what has been learned from the experience that can be useful in future.</p>
<p>FACILITATING RENEGOTIATION Another option for the partnership may be to consider doing something different – in which case partners may need to go right back to Phase 1 in the partnering cycle to re-scope various options. Of course, at this point, partners will have the benefit of building on an established working relationship and a deeper awareness of what they each bring to the partnership. It is not uncommon for partners to complete an agreed project but to recognise that there is new potential from their collaboration. A review process will probably have revealed where this is (and where this is not) the case.</p>	<p>Brokers (either already established with the partners or brought in specifically for this purpose) may have a key part to play in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Ensuring that partners are realistic about the value of reconstructing their partnership to do new things (checking out that they are not simply carrying on out of good will or habit when the partnership has achieved as much as it is likely to) → Facilitating the renegotiation process → Brokering a revised agreement between (all or some of) the partners → Helping partners set a timetable for the development and delivery of a new project
<p>ADVISING ON NEW MECHANISMS Some partnerships will reconstitute their collaboration in the form of a new independent delivery mechanism – with its own identity and formal / legal structure. At this stage, partners may take on a new kind of relationship to the initiative (perhaps as trustees, a Management Board or an Advisory Group). There are a growing number of options that are emerging to deliver more collaborative projects and partners should be encouraged to consider a wide range of options to ensure that the most appropriate mechanism is selected to suit the specific needs.</p>	<p>Brokers can help this process by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Undertaking research on behalf of the partners into possible options for a new partnership-based mechanism – using websites, case studies and visits to other initiatives. → Facilitating discussion on whether or not this is an appropriate route and, if so, which option is likely to be most suitable → Navigating partners through the legal, fiscal and administrative formalities required to register a new organisation (if necessary, since some mechanisms may remain informal) → Ensuring partners make a smooth transition into their new relationship to the initiative.

Taking stock

- Outcomes from the initiative are capable of being sustained in the medium to long term
- The project has been completed and / or is running independently
- Partners are satisfied with the results to date and the proposals for the future of their partnership
- Clear buy-in from others within each partner organisation to the decisions made
- Recognition of the value and achievements of the partnership by others – government, international agencies, the media and / or the wider community
- A completed final case study / report / review from the broker to the partners (if required)

Reference sheet 3: Broker's position, broker's profile

Brokers: Internal or external?

Individuals could be operating either as 'internal' or 'external' brokers according to whether they are placed within one of the partner organisations or outside of any of the partner organisations

Internal Brokers

Managers from within a partner organisation who:

- Prepare their organisation for collaboration in a multi-sector partnership
- Negotiate and represent their organisation's involvement in a partnership
- Play a key role in initiating / managing / developing a partnership arrangement

External Brokers

Independent professionals contracted by one of the partners or by the partnership to:

- Explore the feasibility of adopting a partnership approach
- Facilitate negotiations to develop a partnership and / or a partnering agreement
- Maintain or monitor the effectiveness of partnerships over time
- Build institutional capacity to deliver partnerships and sustain outcomes effectively

These definitions are from PBAS (The ODI / IBLF Partnership Brokers Accreditation Scheme)

There are a range of challenges and constraints associated with being either an internal or an external broker. Perhaps the most obvious for the internal broker is the risk of being (or perceived as being) too partial to their own organisation and therefore unable to be objective enough in helping partners make key decisions about the partnership. For the external broker, the risk (actual or perceived) may be that they are too distant and have too little vested interest in the partnership's success to maintain their commitment when things get difficult.

Whatever the issues are, they will need to be acknowledged openly by the brokers themselves and worked through carefully with partners to avoid them intruding unhelpfully into the partnership and negating the value of having a broker at all.

During the life of a partnership, it may become clear that at certain times an external broker is preferable, in which case those acting as internal brokers can step back into a different role (perhaps simply acting as a representative of their own organisation within the partnership). It is, in fact, not uncommon for individuals to move from being an internal to an external broker (or vice versa) as the requirements for the role change and / or their working relationship to the partnership metamorphoses over time. For example, an internal broker may be seconded to the partnership or an external broker may be employed by the partnership for a period of time.

Brokers: Individuals or organisations?

The concept of partnership brokering itself is becoming more sophisticated. It is no longer simply a new kind of professional role undertaken by individuals (whether internal or external to the partnership). It is increasingly manifesting as a new kind of delivery mechanism requiring different kinds of organisational structure.

Specialist partnership units, for example, are emerging in multinational corporations, government departments, international NGOs as well as within many bilateral and international agencies. These units are expected to bring multi-sector experience and partnering expertise into the organisation. Such units typically develop internal partnering guidelines and support systems for a range of partnership activities. They also provide a 'one-stop shop' for external organisations seeking to become partners as well as creating a gate-keeping function to ensure that the organisation's partnering activities are well coordinated and operating within appropriate boundaries.

Independent intermediary organisations are also increasing in number and can be found in many different settings. Some may be little more than loose mechanisms offering a portfolio of partnering or brokering services. Intermediary organisations can perform a range of functions including: awareness raising; capacity building; convening multi-sector meetings and managing the partnering process by providing a 'neutral' space; skilled facilitation and other professional skills and resources. Such organisations can work at either operational or strategic levels.

Many of the core activities of brokering are similar whether delivered by individuals or by a number of individuals working within a formal organisational framework (partnership unit or intermediary organisation). For this reason, and to minimise repetition, whenever the term 'broker' is used in the text from this point onwards it should be taken to refer to either individual brokers or organisational structures providing brokering services – unless clearly stated otherwise.

Key skills of a broker

Brokers need a wide range of skills and competencies to do their job well. A "Roles and Skills Self-assessment Tool" is available in *The Partnering Toolbook* (Ros Tennyson, published by GAIN, IBLF and UNDP, 2004). This book is designed as a tool for partners to encourage them to assess their own and other's roles in relation to the partnership and to work on developing their own partnering skills, but those acting as brokers may also find it useful.

There are four specific areas in which brokers should strive to develop particular **expertise**:

- 1) **Facilitation**: To undertake successful convening and relationship building (particularly in the early stages of a partnership), brokers will often need to manage early encounters between key players whether in the form of one-to-one meetings, small group activities or in larger task-oriented workshops. Facilitation is not as daunting as many people think, it is simply a question of understanding the goal of the session and helping those involved to work systematically and successfully towards achieving that goal.
- 2) **Negotiation**: Brokers will need to help partners to differentiate between hardball negotiation (where everyone's objective is to have his/her own way no matter what the cost and where there are always winners and losers) and negotiation based on meeting each other's underlying interests (aiming at win-win-win scenarios for all players). To manage the latter type of negotiation, brokers need to create an atmosphere of open exploration and exercise particular skills in sensitive questioning (to reveal underlying interests) and patient interpretation between partners that have differing imperatives and priorities.
- 3) **Coaching**: As the partnership progresses, the broker has a new focus, transferring responsibilities to partners (or project staff). This involves stepping back from a front

line role and working rather more behind the scenes to support and coach individual partners or staff in new skills.

- 4) **Reviewing**: Even when partnerships are well-established they benefit from regular and creative attention to ensure that they remain animated and do not lose momentum. The broker, as someone with close knowledge of the partnership, is uniquely placed to provide partners with opportunities to reflect on how the partnership is going and to support some form of regular review process that may lead to changes either within the partnership's structure/focus or in relation to project activities.

As a key part of the transference of roles and responsibilities, brokers need to become increasingly transparent in explaining what they are doing and why. This enables partners to understand the brokering process better and to learn in what ways their own behaviours and skills may need to be adapted if they are to take over many aspects of what has hitherto been the broker's role.

In terms of **behaviour**, bad brokers are those who are:

- Bossy towards partners
- Possessive about the partnership
- Controlling of the decision-making process
- Conceited about good results
- Incapable of letting go and handing over to others

And as a conclusion, ones can consider the following **ground rules for good brokering**:

- Get inside different partner perspectives
- Demonstrate clarity of purpose and focus in everything you undertake
- Provide practical, productive and tactful interventions
- Be meticulous in record keeping and communicating
- Support rather than dominate in the way you behave
- Accept that you are a servant to the partnering process
- Be ready and willing to let go when the time is right

Instructions on group work and exercises

Before starting each exercise and the group work, please verify that all group members have well understood the exercise or the assignment at hand.

To the facilitator:

- Make sure participants are distributed into groups of interest, based on gender, or at random, whatever is needed. The objective is to stimulate real interaction between all the participants at the end of the day, that means to insure that one moment or another any of them will get the opportunity to express him/herself and to be listened by others. This supposes they feel comfortable enough in his/her group, and that these groups are motivating enough: sometimes it is good to make mixed groups to avoid boring exchanges between people that know too well each other, sometimes it's better to make it easier for participants (for example having shy women together) ...
- Make sure each group receives adequate tools and materials such as flip chart sheets, markers, etc.
- Assign an appropriate place/location to each group and sufficient chairs and tables so that they can work comfortably.
- Make sure the participants have a good understanding of the task at hand before they split into their groups so that they do not spend unnecessary time in trying to understand the assignment.

To the participants:

Discuss and exchange within the group about your individual understanding of the expected outputs of the exercise and make sure to come to a common understanding on:

- The objective of the exercise (what is expected and why?)
- How to proceed to answer the question as a group
- How to 'visualise' your findings (using poster paper or pin board and coloured cards or the computer)
- Who to appoint to lead/moderate the discussion
- How and who to present results during the plenary session
- If relevant: Who to be in charge of the final electronic write up

Exercise 1: Personal experiences of brokering

The participants are split into pairs.

Each pair exchanges for 15 minutes on their concrete experiences with brokering. You then select one brokering case study and prepare a plenary presentation, specifying:

- The issue (context) that was dealt with
- The people involved and their position
- The process
- The outcomes

Exercise 2: Identifying brokering actions

The participants are split into groups of 3 to 4 people. This exercise is based on the film *Coaching and Collaboration* (the Soya story of Benin).

First, each group reviews the film and more specifically the chapters 1, 2, 6, 7, 8 and 10.

Thereafter, each group draws a value chain and cluster map, using the technique as presented in Module 1 (Introduction to local networking and empowerment); if needed you will have an additional look at chapter 2.

Thereafter identify any ‘brokering actions’ as seen in the film. For each brokering action, you will specify:

- When the action was performed (at what time during the ABC lifetime)?
- What was the context and the issue?
- Who was the broker?
- For whom was the brokering meant?

The groups fill out the following table for the plenary presentation.

N°	Brokering action	When	Context/issue	By whom? (Broker)	For whom?

Exercise 3: Advantages and disadvantages of different broker-partner relationships

The participants are split-up into 4 groups. Each group works on one of the four types of brokers related to the Advantages/disadvantages table taken from *The Brokering Guidebook* (Ros Tennyson, 2005), as presented below.

The participants illustrate the points listed in the table with very short, concrete examples, that are as much as possible taken from their own work with ABCs.

Table 3.1: Advantages and disadvantages of different broker-partner relationships

	Advantages	Disadvantages	Limitations of role
Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong familiarity with one of the resources/actors • Knowledge of organisation’s network of contacts and their established main partner organisations • Access to organisational procedures and systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential bias in favour of their own organisation • Difficulty in challenging their colleagues or take risks within existing organisational culture • Insufficient time to devote to role as broker 	May have too little time or authority to do more than provide back-up for the partnership administration
Innovator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectation to be quite entrepreneurial in approach • Encouragement to bring new ideas and approaches into the organisation • Opportunity to build capacity and engagement internally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some constraints on role from being located within a partner organisation • Comparative operational freedom causing resentment from internal colleagues • Vulnerability to changes in organisational policy 	May be perceived by other partners as having too much power located within one of the partner organisations.
Pioneer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerable (almost total) independence and freedom from any specific organisational allegiance • Ample opportunities for creativity and innovation • Freedom from constraints that inevitably come with a more subordinate role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too much opportunity for unilateral decision-making • Potential unwillingness to transfer ownership to partners • Tendency to emphasise innovation over delivery and implementation 	May be difficult for partners to control because of tendency to operate more as a director than a broker.
Animator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom to operate independently of any partner • Fresh perspective on what to build without preconceptions • Acceptance by partners as a specialist bringing new skills to the partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate knowledge and understanding of the partner organisations • Ability to move on too easily if things become difficult • Frustration with holding a reactive mandate without the benefits of being an internal broker 	May be used by partners as a way of dumping those tasks they should be taking on themselves.

Source: The Brokering Guidebook, Ros Tennyson, 2005

Exercise 4: Types of ABC coaches from a brokering point of view

1. The participants first have a close look at Table 4.1 and try to position **themselves (each)**, on the basis of the ‘broker position’ and ‘organisation’ columns.
2. The participants are split-up into 4 groups ; making the groups with the other participants that are in the same ‘cell’.
3. The TOR for the groups are the following:
 1. Within the group discuss the following points that you will present in plenary:
 - Do you agree with the advantages/strengths and disadvantages/weaknesses mentioned in the table?
 - Give concrete examples (from your experience) to support your point of view.
 - Can you, based again on your own experiences, add any other strength or weakness?

Table 4.1: Exploratory typology of ABC coaches

Broker position	Organisation	Complementary question	Advantages Strengths (in terms of brokering)	Disadvantages Weaknesses (in terms of brokering)
Coach is external to the cluster/PPP	NGO		Neutral between different actors of the cluster	Looking to improve their own business (favouring their friends, developing their own activities...)
	Other private (consultancy office)		Neutral between different actors of the cluster	Looking to improve their own business (favouring their friends, developing their own activities...)
	Government or local administration			Possible lack of network Better skills in technical aspects than business
Coach is internal to the cluster /PPP	FO	Does the coach belong to the same organisation as the champion? (risk not being neutral enough)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good familiarity with the cluster context • Trust because well known • Sustainability, because remains after the end of the project • Cost-embeddedness 	Working mainly for the interest of their organisation (‘instrumentalise’ the cluster), compromising the trust in that case. Being too intimately involved that could possibly mean not having enough imagination to think out of the box.
	Firm	Is the firm interested in capacity strengthening of its staff?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability, because remains after the end of the project • Cost-embeddedness 	Working mainly in the interest of the firm and not enough for other actors ⇔ need for a high level of understanding from the coach/advisor about what is at stake with sustainability of the business (‘do not cut the branch you’re sitting on’) Being too intimately involved that could possibly mean not ot having enough imagination to think out of the box.

MODULE 3

Brokering in value chain partnerships

	Other small-scale direct actors (trader, processor)	Does the coach belong to the same organisation as the champion? (risk not being neutral enough)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong familiarity of the cluster context• Trust because well known• Sustainability, because remains after project• Cost-embeddedness	Working mainly in the interest of their organisation (compromises regarding trust) Being too intimately involved that could possibly mean not having enough imagination to think out of the box.
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Exercise 5: Role play: Brokering archetypes

1. The participants are split-up into four groups.
2. In plenary: Look the table below (extracted from ‘Partnership broker’s profile – Brokering archetypes, personal attributes, technical skills & resources’ by The Partnership Brokers Association, December 2011) , that is the basis of this exercise.

Archetype	Universal attributes	Expressed in brokering as
Seer (clairvoyant in french))	Gift of foresight	Visioning
Sage	Gift of insight	Understanding/knowledgeable
Fighter	Brave and resilient	Campaigning
Peacemaker	Courageous and humble	Mediating
Magician	Transformational	Imagining
Healer	Curative	Problem solving
Explorer	Adventurous	Navigating
Builder	Practical	Organising
Inventor	Innovative	Pioneering
Judge	Arbitrator	Balancing
Teacher	Informs and corrects	Educating
Guardian	Nurtures & guides	Mentoring

3. The groups read the table carefully and take some time for questions or clarifications before going into group work.
4. Each group comes up with a role play of maximum 5 minutes to illustrate a broker in action in a particular situation. You will imagine two scenes, each adapted to represent the two different broker’s archetypes *written below in italics*. Then one person will represent the broker (playing out the archetype), while the other group members represent the beneficiaries of the brokering.
 - **Group 1:** Establishing linkages between farmers and Fludor (first as a *fighter* and then as a *sage*)
 - **Group 2:** A small group of processors that has been equipped by another project, asks for joining the ABC (first as a *peacemaker* and then as an *explorer*)
 - **Group 3:** Looking for new market opportunities in Cotonou for soy milk (first as an *explorer*, and then as a *builder*)
 - **Group 4:** Negotiating arrangements with financial institutions to receive credit for warrantage (first as a *teacher*, and then as a *builder*).





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