A true partnership for development?

Case study of a partnership between NGOs for education from Peru and Norway

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Abstract

This case study analyzes the partnership relationship between a Northern and a Southern NGO working for education and development. The literature depicts, in a general sense, partnership as an asymmetric and rhetorical relationship. Thus, the research questions explore how a concrete partnership is constructed and perceived by its actors, helping to determine whether a true partnership is more or less possible. A qualitative approach is used to accomplish the purpose of the research, based on data gathered during 4 weeks of fieldwork conducted in Peru and Norway in September 2005. Opposing the statements in the literature about the common practices, the partners in this case study have a particular relationship: they do recognize the asymmetry of the relationship and set mechanisms in place to balance the inequalities. Assisted by Freire's liberation theory, the discussion is centred in how elements, emerged from the data, promote or hinder this balance. The case, between a Peruvian and a Norwegian NGO, is portrayed as non-traditional, which can be considered an important factor for this partnership to function the way it does.

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Abbreviations

APCI	Agencia Peruana de Cooperación Interantional (Peruvian Agency for International Co-operation
BAS	beyond aid scenario
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EFA	Education For All
GDP	gross domestic product
GNI	gross national income
GRO	grassroots organizations
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NGDO	non-governmental development organization
NGO	non-governmental organization
NNGO	Northern non-governmental organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation
ODA	official development assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SAP	structural adjustment programs
SNGO	Southern non-governmental organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WCEFA	World Conference Education For All

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1. Introduction

This study is about the relationship between donors and recipients in the context of aid for development, concerning specifically Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working for education, both from developed countries of the so-called 'North' as donors, and local NGOs of the South –or poor countries- as recipients. A very important fact is that the nature of this relationship has taken a special model in the recent years, changing from the former conditionality imposed by the developed countries in order to provide aid, to a new way of interaction called *partnership*. According to Pugh et al. (1987, cited in Buchanan, 1994:7), the term partnership is adequately summarized as "a working relationship that is characterized by a shared sense of purpose, mutual respect and the willingness to negotiate".

My purpose in this study is to explore how a partnership between a Northern and a Southern NGO takes place, how its actors experience it, and understand how they contribute to construct the partnership. My initial interest on the topic started from the concern about the relationship between rich and poor countries, wondering why the former would be engaged in such an activity of helping the poorer nations, and whether they get some profit out of it. After an initial literature review and the understanding that there is indeed and interest from the part of the donors –sometimes economical, sometimes political- I realized that in the new discourse of the partnership it is still often that the relationship is dominated by the donor, and little voice is given to the Southern partner or recipient.

To explore this situation in reality, I considered it interesting to study the way in which Norway is related to Latin American countries, informed by my Latin American ethnic background on the one hand, and my current place of residence on the other. In addition to this, Norway has a reputation of being a donor country motivated by altruistic reasons and reaching the 0,7% of its GNP given to official development assistance (ODA) (German & Randell, 2000), a fact that rendered a case study on it even more appealing.

I chose the case study approach because it is relevant to give an account of a concrete partnership that is taking place in the reality. Moreover, I considered it important to enhance the Southern perspective, in an attempt to make a contribution balancing the donor-dominated literature about partnership. The following quote expresses it accurately:

> The most conspicuous absence in all the scattered literature on aid for education is any coherent account from the recipient perspective of how educational aid is perceived, negotiated, managed and reviewed (King, 1986, quoted in Brock-Utne, 2000:69).

The research questions

This study has three main interrelated questions, formulated in order to accomplish the already mentioned purpose:

- *How is the partnership perceived and experienced by the partners?*

This refers to the feelings and meanings that the partners involved in the actual case have. It is important to note that both the Northern and the Southern partners are included, trying to balance the account and not falling on either side of the North/South relationship.

- *How do they contribute to build the partnership?*

Refers to what each partner gives and gets, considering the partnership process as a two-way alley, and trying to understand the interaction rather than to judge or evaluate it.

- *Can it be considered a true partnership?*

I am aware that this cannot be a yes/no question. Rather, the answers to the previous questions and the elements of the literature, give a base to portray this partnership as a more or less successful one.

The research approach

The methods I used in order to explore the answers to these questions have a qualitative nature, which matches with the character of the study's purpose. This means that, in contrast to positivistic and quantitative methods that attempt to measure reality, qualitative research tries to understand social reality "focusing on descriptions of how people experience and how they perceive their experience of the phenomena under study" (Glesne, 1999: 7). In Glesne's words, this is a phenomenological study. To accomplish it, I conducted a two week fieldwork period in Peru in September 2005, complementing it with interviews conducted in Norway before and after the fieldwork.

Scope and limitations

This is a case study and limited generalization is warranted. The described data are rooted in a specific point in time and place. My intention then, is not to make generalizations out of this particular case, but rather, to explore it in depth in order to understand how the partnership is constructed and perceived by its actors.

The fieldwork conducted in this study is mainly focused on the Southern perspective. On the one hand, this is an advantage that permits this investigation to contribute to the scarce literature seen from the South. On the other hand, logistic reasons impeded me to have access to more than one staff member of the Norwegian office of the NNGO; nevertheless, this contribution gives a Northern perspective. To balance this account, I included the

perspective of the Peruvian staff of the NNGO, that, even if working for the Norwegian NGO, their local origin provides another facet of the Southern perspective.

Overview

This study is organized into seven chapters. After having described the main purpose, stated the research question and explained the rationale of this study in this first chapter, *Chapter 2* provides an extensive literature review that sets partnership in context, describes its origins and provides different models to understand it. In addition, I set in evidence the debate surrounding partnership as primarily rhetorical, and describe the subtle mechanisms that reveal partnership as an asymmetric relationship.

In Chapter 3 I portray the actors involved in this partnership at a global and local level. In the macro perspective, Norway and Peru as non-traditional partners for development, and at the micro-level, I describe the individual organizations that co-work in this case. In *Chapter 4* I give an account of the methodology employed in the fieldwork while gathering data. This chapter also includes a discussion about the ways I established the trustworthiness essential in any piece of research.

Chapter 5 begins with an explanation of the thorough data analysis process, summarizing the categorization procedure and presenting the obtained 'phenomena' in a graphic manner. Subsequent to this, I display the data making an extensive use of participant's quotes, in order to conserve the essence of their meanings and maintaining the narrative style widely used in qualitative research. *Chapter 6* represents the second part of the analysis, in which I discuss the findings exposed in chapter five. In the first part, I contrast the data gathered during fieldwork to the different models of partnership proposed in the literature review, making the links between theory and practice. In the second part, I make use of Paulo Freire's liberation theory, in order to understand partnership as a process in which Northern and Southern partners -oppressors and oppressed – try to liberate each other. In Chapter 7 I present my conclusions and further comments.

2. Literature Review: Setting the stage for partnership

2.1 The broader domain: development, aid for development and education for development

The very idea of what **development** is can take various forms and directions depending on the period in time and the paradigms that surround this concept. Among the theories of development that have influenced the 20th century, there are modernization, dependency and liberation theories. In a very simplified way to explain it, some of these latest ideas about development (see Burkley, 2002) have a linear conception, like modernization theory that sees the condition of industrialized and rich countries of the West as the desirable stage, implying that the rest of the world should just follow their example in order to be developed. Other theories talk about development and underdevelopment among 'centres' (urban areas or rich countries) and 'peripheries' (rural areas or poor countries), stating that the former benefit from the latter in an unequal relationship, provoking the underdevelopment of the peripheries and the development of the centres. In addition to these theories, liberation theory by Paulo Freire maintains that liberation, through the education of the oppressed masses (concientizaçao) "…*is* development… [and] liberation theory has been adopted at various times by policy makers in some countries as the main tool for development" (Fägerlind & Saha ,1989: 26).

2.1.1 Education, Aid and Development

An important issue here is that whatever the theory about development should be, the truth is that education is a common element across them. In the decades of the 1950s and 1960s, the causal relationship between education and development was accepted, which was influenced by human capital theory and supported by publications and funding programs of multilateral organizations such as UNESCO (Fägerlind &Saha, 1989). The influence of these publications was enormous in encouraging educational expansion in Third World nations. According to Arnove, Altbach & Kelly (1992) during the 1960s, donor agencies also provided important research support that led to numerous studies "proving" the relationship linking education to development and economic growth:

> This Human Resource Development theory in turn provided powerful inducements for Third World policy makers to devote large proportions of national budgets to their education ministries. At the same time, belief in the efficacy of this theory led the donor agencies to increase their developmental assistance for education (p.58).

 After all, "if education was associated with economic progress, then surely it had to be a prominent component of development aid" (Samoff, 2003: 56).

According to Kierman (2000), while UNESCO's influence has decreased, the World Bank has taken the lead and established 'dominant ideologies' about how education contributes to development, going from the basic needs approach to vocational education, passing through lifelong learning to the social cuts of the structural adjustment programs (SAP) and coming back to poverty alleviation. His reflection is that the transforming power of education was overestimated, and it has been realized that "education is not the panacea for all societal ills … [but] it is the links between education and other societal issues that are the determinants of national and social development" (Kierman, 2000:196). In a similar order of ideas Chabbott (2003:50) declares, "in the absence of empirical evidence, much confidence about education –as in many other fields- is the result of repeating seemingly logical rationales in many different settings simultaneously. Eventually these become conventional wisdom or standards and thereafter taken for granted, that is, socially constructed institutions".

However, four decades after the apogee of modernization theories and despite the optimistic statements at the Jomtien Education for All conference (EFA), "aid to education accounts for about 5% of development assistance, and even less that 2% if we focus on basic education" (Kierman, 2000: 195). In his analysis of the influence of foreign aid in education Mike Kierman says that a contradiction lies in the decreasing volume of the aid for education, and the increasing role of donor funding. Notwithstanding optimism in EFA, the volume of aid for education is not increasing.

When discussing the relevance of education in the development domain, Charlotte Chabbott (2003:49) makes a very important point, saying that one of the biggest concerns of development is the participation of "those who have found their way into the modern sector. This broadening participation is difficult to imagine without increasing access to education". Moreover, one of the most important conclusions of the work by Fägerlind & Saha (1989:283) is that when talking about the relationship between education and development, it is imperative to know "what kind of education is important for what kind of development".

2.1.2 North and South, and aid for development

A second important idea across the theories framing development is that the world is polarized into powerful and rich countries -mainly Western- who are the so-called 'North', and a huge gap divides them from poor countries, the 'South'. The latter's economies are so vulnerable, that the life conditions of their populations and the unequal distribution of wealth within them result enormously contrasting vis-à-vis the excesses of the so-called First World

societies. "Those who are powerful and dominant in a context are, then 'uppers' and those who are weak and subordinate are 'lowers'. Like magnets, people are oriented in North-South fields of relationships, with the uppers above and lowers below" (Chambers, 2003:58). In the same sense, Brock-Utne (2000:4) uses the term South "to denote developing countries-most of which are located in the southern hemisphere" and North to refer to "modern, industrialized countries mostly located in the northern hemisphere, though a couple of the countries, like Japan and Australia, are actually located in the Southern hemisphere are included in this concept".

Due this situation of a world divided into poor and rich, it is interesting to see how these two sides began to interact with each other in order to help the South reach the 'development' stage. It was in 1947, after the Second World War, that the provision of aid for development started, when the United States formulated the Marshall Plan with the main idea of economically reconstructing Europe (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003). The success of the Marshall Plan "provided the impetus for turning focus to the problems of the developing world" (Hjertholm & White, 2000: 82). In this context, the era of development was born when Truman, president of the US, declared in 1949 the necessity to launch a program for the improvement of the underdeveloped areas.

> On that day, two billion people became underdeveloped. In a real sense, from that time on, they ceased being what they were, in all their diversity, and were transmogrified into an inverted mirror of other's reality: a mirror that belittles them and sends them off to the end of the queue, a mirror that defines their identity, which is really that of a heterogeneous and diverse majority, simply in terms of a homogenizing and narrow minority (Esteva, 1996:7).

Coming back to more recent times, Charlotte Chabbott (2003) points out that "by the last decade of the 20th century, the discourse around development had transformed the idea of development into a national imperative, and had legitimated claims for transfer of resources for international development from more to less industrialized countries" (p.62).

But, who are these rich and powerful actors that provide help? Who are these poor countries that are assisted? Foster (1999:31) points out the fact that these categories "never rested on solid scientific foundations", but it was just accepted after the Second World War and the colonization period that the world was divided into rich and poor countries. The scene has changed significantly after the Cold War, with the former soviet republics being added to the list of recipients of aid for development.

2.1.3 The actors involved in the development co-operation

In more concrete terms, and according to the actual world scene, the world has been divided and listed into donors and recipients. According to Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-

Pedersen (2003) donors could be states, international organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations. The authors make the distinction between official donor organizations that include *bilateral* state aid organizations[1] and *multilateral,* international organizations with larger or smaller groups of states as members[2]. Joel Samoff (2003) makes some important clarifications concerning this distinction. He says that the international organizations have all their own strategies, interests and forms, and affirms that the bilateral organizations are "often formally located within the foreign ministry [and] were created to serve national interests through the provision of financial and technical assistance" (p.63). It is clear from this perspective that both groups have to defend the interest of their nations and/or be accountable to their taxpayers. In general terms, when the donor countries give their aid through the United Nations it is mainly moved by humanitarian reasons. On the other hand, the donor countries are more likely to have other kinds of rewards -economical or political- when canalizing the aid resources via a multinational institution such as the World Bank.

The other representatives of the donor community are the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Since the sphere of NGOs forms a central topic in this study, I will discuss it in a deeper manner later in this chapter. However, it can be said beforehand that as donors, NGOs can operate at many different levels from international to local, and run a great variety of projects, programmes and other forms of aid. They are defined in a narrow sense as a "specific type of organization working in the field of 'development' –one which works with people to help them improve their social and economic situation and prospects" (Commonwealth Foundation, 1995, in Elu & Banya, 1999:184). In 1995,Terje Tvedt wrote that "the NGO channel is a new type of international social system which is framed by a particular relationship by internal socio-economic and political mechanisms and external donor interest" (Tvedt, 1995:ii).

As the counterpart of the donors, talking about the recipients, it is not surprising that it is precisely the donor community who defines who they are. "The group of recipients has been newly defined by OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) –the main donors' club- as it decided for statistical purposes to establish two separate lists of recipients" (Foster, 1999: 33).

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[1] e.g.: Norwegian Agency for Development (NORAD) or United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
[2] e.g.: United Nations (UN), the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Development Assistance Committee (DAC) from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

On the one hand, Official Development Assistance (ODA) recipients are defined as *developing countries*[3] and on the other hand, official assistance recipients, defined as *countries in transition*[4]. Some of them are chosen to be a recipient because of their colonial past, others because of commercial reasons or humanitarian relief when a catastrophe occurs. Out of these rigid and economical definitions of the donors, we can say that a recipient can be a national government or authorities at different levels. They can also be local NGOs in the recipient countries, but the main and legitimate targets of this help are the people living in those nations, and the NGOs are just supposed to manage the received aid.

2.1.4 Motives to engage in aid for development

Beside the political reasons that moved an economic power such as the USA to become engaged in helping some less fortunate nations in the post Second World War, we can find other kinds of justifications for such donor actions. These motivations were distinguished into three different categories by Robinson and Tarp (2000), namely: 1) altruism; 2) political ideology, foreign policy and commercial interests; and 3) economical development. To these categories, Degnbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen (2003) add another set of reasons such as environmental considerations. Donor's motivations are not always purely in one form or the other, but rather a combination of them.

The altruistic reasons, which are of main concern in this study, are based on moral obligations. These can take the form of racist colonial ideas such as "the white man's burden" that required the modern Western societies to 'help' the 'backward' and native societies. In a more recent context, these moral reasons are founded in the concerns that donors have about the poverty and inequality situation of the world and the conviction that the rich countries have to help the poor. This is expressed by the Development Assistance Committee as its *first* reason for providing aid (OECD-DAC, 1996):

> The first motive is fundamentally humanitarian. Support for development is a compassionate response to the extreme poverty and human suffering that still afflict one-fifth of the world's population. … Their deprivation is unnecessary and its continuation is intolerable. The moral imperative of support for development is self-evident (p.6).

When the main reasons to help are actually moral, it can be called 'human internationalism.' (Stokke, 1989&1995) This is the form that mainly the Nordic countries adopt, under the conviction that it is the right thing to do (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen 2003).

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[3] Developing countries include: Least developed countries; other low-income countries; lower-middle-income countries and territories; upper-middle-income countries and territories and high income countries and territories defined by their per capita GNP. (DAC list of aid recipients in January 2000 appendix in Degnbol-Martinussen, John and Poul Engberg-Pedersen,2003:318)

[4] Countries and territories in transition include: Central and Eastern European countries and new independent states of the former Soviet Union and more advanced developing countries and territories (*ibid.*).

It would be naïve to think that when donors give help for humanitarian reasons they do not get anything in return. It is important to make it clear that whatever the reason – declared or undeclared- for a donor to engage in cooperation for aid, there will always be a self-benefit for doing this, either direct or indirect, and in the short or the long term. This fact was recognized as early as in 1969 in the Pearson Report (cited in Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen 2003:10), and it is very well acknowledged in this eloquent quote of the DAC's declaration *Shaping the Twenty-First Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation* (OECD-DAC, 1996) when stating the second motivation for their efforts:

> The second reason for supporting development is enlightened self-interest. Development benefits people not only in poor countries, but also in the industrialized donor countries. Increased prosperity in the developing countries demonstrably expands markets for the goods and services of the industrialized countries (p.6).

In a straightforward way to say it, "assistance is considered a big business" (Samoff, 2003:66) because donors get access to new markets for their products or services. A patent verification of this business is the well-known 'tied aid'. This is, according to Degnbol-Martinussen, and Engberg-Pedersen (2003:13) "a donor's demand that grants or loans must be used to buy goods and services from the donor's own country".

As a third category, Robinson and Tarp (2000) include the economic development as an end in itself; it is considered a necessary achievement for further accomplishments of other goals such as poverty reduction, democracy, gender equality, or universal schooling among others. A fourth reason has an environmental character. These came into the debate of foreign aid after a realization that in countries with the higher levels of poverty, the biggest environmental degradation can be observed, and in the long run it would affect all countries, rich or poor.

The more recent kind of motivations mentioned both by the DAC (OECD-DAC, 1996) document and Dengbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen (2003) is based on the recognition of the fact that the world is interdependent, and what happens to a nation affects in someway the others. These motivations are taking again a more national security nature, and the involved issues like migration, drug trafficking and terrorism.

The recipient countries are in the same 'tune', concerned with the goal of achieving economic and social development. In order to reach this aim, governments in the developing countries realise that they need the transfer of external resources due to their weak economies, which is their reason for engaging in this process. If countries receive aid through the United Nations system, this is less likely to be tied. Recipients have also reasons not to participate. This happens when groups in the developing countries oppose the

acceptance of aid and the commitment to a loan, because they are aware of the ties and the further dependent relationship that come with the lending (cf. Bako, 1994 who illustrates the Nigerian case).

Other goals could incite developmental efforts. That is the case of a more idealistic and less lucrative nature that inspires the work some NGOs. Degnbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen (2003) say that NGOs working for development, in general terms, are interested in the participation of the people, encouraging them to take control of their own development. These NGOs are based on some ideologies and political ideas and they commonly work with counterparts that share them. These same authors note that the "NGOs often wish to create bonds of friendship between people in the North and South and promote global responsibility and solidarity in their own countries NGOs" (p. 37). It is this kind of relationship that I will direct my attention to later in this chapter.

2.1.5 Five decades of development

It is not the purpose of this study to analyze in depth the progression of the development strategies along the second half of the twentieth century. However, it is as a result of this evolution that the aid for development arrived to a new strategy called partnership, which is the central topic of this study. To make a very brief account of the progress of development approaches across the last decades of the 20th century, we can see first that, the methods, goals, and strategies proposed to achieve development have passed through a pendulum-like progression. This back and forth process that went from economical growth considerations in the 1950s and 1960s, to prioritising of the poor in the 1970s, to adjustment programmes and conditionalities in the 1980s, and back to the poverty alleviation in the 1990s that reflects a trial-error kind of learning by those who conceive the strategies to solve poverty and unequal conditions around the globe. Second, it is precisely the donor community we refer to when talking about the planners of development. Through the development decades, there has been a clear domination of the field by the donors, the powerful actors that impose mechanisms designed from above. Third, this top-down structure of the development actions has usually no consideration of the diversity of the recipients; it is insensitive to the particular needs and is focused in the kind of projects that the donor agencies are eager to promote with standardized solutions; there has been a lack of influence of the voices of those to whom development is supposed to address. Fourth, it is important to keep in mind that the donors have self-interests that drive their willingness to provide aid. And last, but not least, that

these turns and swings in strategies are the result of the failure to improve the life conditions of the poorest inhabitants of our planet[5] (Meza-Oaxaca, 2005).

2.2 Partnership: the new agenda

2.2.1 The product of lessons learned

As described above, the aid for development domain suffered several transformations until it arrived to the partnership strategy. A critic of partnership very well depicted this change of strategy, arguing that "donor efforts at establishing a 'new' partnership indicate that the old one was not working well enough" (Kifle et al., 1997 in Kayizzi-Mugerwa 1998:221), and this is not a spontaneous discovery. The seeds of partnership were planted in the last decade with little encouraging results of the efforts and resources devoted to development that ended up in an 'aid crises' or 'aid fatigue'. The refreshing wind of partnership came to counter an atmosphere of regrets, acknowledgment of mistakes and lessons learned mainly among the donors, recipients, academics, NGOs and the private sector. The diagnosis was made: the donor-driven project model, over-prescriptive and interventionist that lacked the ownership and involvement of recipients didn't work. The medicine: a new way of relating the North and South in the aid for development field.

The DAC (OECD, 1996) expressed this awareness in 1996 by saying: "one of the key lessons about development cooperation is that donor-driven initiatives rarely take root and that developing countries and their people must be at the centre of any effective system" (p.15), and admits the need of the counterpart's participation in this way: "it is clear that success has been achieved only where the people and the institutions of developing countries have made sustained efforts to help themselves" (p. 7).

Together with partnership, the modality of aid delivery changed. "It followed that the projects would be no longer run by several foreign agencies, but it was now the turn of governments to run an integrated sector program, owned by the southern country" (King, 1999:21). In this sense, ownership, included in the partnership discourse, becomes "an important counterbalance to the admitted financial dominance of the North" (Ibid, p.15). For Joel Samoff (2004) it is a way to combat the critiques of the intrusiveness of the foreign aid, seeking to reinforce national efforts.

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[5] This analysis has been extracted from the term paper entitled "Partnership: The New Way of Aid Relationship between North and South", submitted by me in the Spring of 2005 to the Faculty of Education of the University of Oslo.

Concerning other donors different from the DAC, *The Reality of Aid Project* (Randel, German & Ewing 2000: 71) says that "even the World Bank discovered long ago that its efforts were inefficient if recipients felt that the programmes were forced upon them by others, regardless of their own priorities". The Bank therefore called for local ownership and participation. This report declare that even if it is valid that donors focus on their priorities, the aid they provide will not enhance neither partnership, nor local responsibility if those priorities are not adapted to the Southern context. It is easy to find in recent literature about partnership declarations of this nature, that recognize the failures of bilateral and multilateral agencies to take into account the beneficiaries' ideas and the value of indigenous knowledge, as well as critiques to the top-down approach. In the same tune, the eighth *Millennium Development Goal* is to "Develop a global partnership for development" (UN, 2005:36), which reflects the need for "a global coordination that has been lacking in the past" (Kayizzi-Mugerwa, 1998: 223). Among many others, one of the reasons for the adoption of partnership can be the continuing tendency in the bilateral and multilateral agencies to "take over the aspirational language of non-governmental organizations whose discourse for years has described the South as partners rather than recipients or counterparts" (King, 1999:15).

This is how by the end of the 1990's the term 'partnership' became the new buzzing word. However, the term is not that new; Gerry Helleiner (2000: 14) claims that it "has been part of approved rhetoric in the development community for a very long time", at least since 1969 when the Pearson Commission published its report entitled *Partners in Development*.

2.2.2 The sources of partnership

In his article about the shift from projects to supporting sectors, Joel Samoff (2004) quotes a donor in an interview stating that "there has been an evolution of thinking among the donors. We have moved from doing *to* the countries, to doing *for* countries to doing *with* countries" (p.398). In the same order of ideas, the official report of the DAC (OECD-DAC, 1996) states: "we need to change how we think and how we operate, in a far more coordinated effort than we have known until now" (p.9). The Development Assistance Committee (1996) pronounced its belief on partnership as follows:

> Acceptance of the partnership model, with greater clarity in the roles of partners, is one of the most positive changes we are proposing in the framework for development co-operation. In a partnership, development co-operation does not try to do things for developing countries and their people, but with them. It must be seen as a collaborative effort to help them increase their capacities to do things for themselves. Paternalistic approaches have no place in this framework. In a true partnership, local actors should progressively take the lead while external partners back their efforts to assume greater responsibility for their own development. (p.13)

So far, I have illustrated that the sources of partnership are located in the North; however, Kenneth King (1999) uncovers a third source of true partnership, namely the South itself. He claims that the "Southern insistence on a new relationship with the North must itself be a crucial ingredient of any meaningful concept of a development partnership" (p.16). Still, this point of view is an exception, because a bigger part of the literature considers partnership as a Northern-imposed idea to add legitimacy to their operations in the South (Lister, 2000).

2.2.3 The rhetoric or partnership

Together with the change of strategy comes a parallel change in the language and its implications. There is no more reference to 'donors' and 'beneficiaries' that make us think of a passive behaviour of the developing country to which the resources are transferred. Rather, the term 'partnership' implies an active role of both actors –donors and recipients- and implies that they act on equal conditions: "Those in the receiving end of aid are portrayed as if they were on equal terms, they are 'partners'- with implicitly the same objectives, and the same ability to articulate these as the donors" (Crewe & Harrison, 1999: 70). We could now talk about 'Southern' and 'Northern' partners. The donors now call themselves "external partners"; however, they continue using the terms 'developed' and 'developing' countries. In any case, it is useful to be careful with the use of words like equality. For an example, when the Swedish Ministry of Foreign affairs refers to Africa as "equal", it does not mean equality with Sweden, but rather that African countries could be considered equal to other countries to whom the donors impose their requirements (Kayizzi-Mugerwa, 1998).

Strirrat and Henkel (1997, quoted in Crewe & Harrison, 1999: 73) argue that partnership is a term attractive to the donors because it is slippery, vague and ambiguous; it can both deny individual identity of each partner and help to the donors with the problems of legitimacy and accountability that concern them. Degnbol- Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen (2003) note these changes in ideological language in relation to development assistance, pointing to the evolving concepts of aid, then assistance, cooperation, and finally, partnership. Joel Samoff (2004) describes the shift of discourse as "no longer the rich uncle helping the indigent and perhaps profligate nephew, but partners working side by side to enable the poor to become more self-sufficient" (p.397).

2.2.4 Definitions

So far, we have explored some conceptions of partnership in the donor's terms. Partnership could be also portrayed in more neutral terms as "a working relationship that is characterized

by a shared sense of purpose, mutual respect and the willingness to negotiate. This implies a sharing of information, responsibility, skills, decision making and accountability" (Pugh et al., 1987 cited in Buchanan, 1994:7). Poole (1995:2, cited in Mullinix, 2002: 78) defines partnership as:

> an association between two or more persons, groups, or organizations who join together to achieve a common goal that neither one alone can accomplish. This association is characterized by joint membership rights, by democratic participation, and by shared responsibility. Each member agrees to contribute resources to the partnership with the understanding that the possession or enjoyment of the benefits will be shared by all. Partners work hard to strengthen each other and to endure conflict and change, because they recognize that their shared goal extends beyond the reach of any one member.

This definition leads us to the basis upon which partnership is built. Kayizzi-Mugerwa (1998) gives the examples of the British and Swedish conceptions of partnership. For the former, 'political commitment to poverty elimination' of the Southern partner is essential, and it depends, of course, on the capacity that the Southern partner has to assume this commitment. For the Swedes – who have been portrayed as one of the forerunners of partnership promotion - partnership should be based on a minimum of shared values, such as gender equality, freedom of expression, democracy and other Western constructs. In addition to this, a code of conduct is proposed to the donor community, that includes "avoidance of sudden shifts of mood, …undertake `genuine' negotiations, …respect for the agreed division of responsibility, and to resist all temptation to take over `processes and responsibility' from the recipient" (Kayizzi-Mugerwa 1998: 223).

2.2.5 New names, old practices

What is expected from the partners represents what Kenneth King (1999) terms 'preconditions to partnership'. According to this idea, it has been proposed (Dower, 1998 in King, 1999:16) that "the new paradigm of partnership may not remove selectivity or indirect conditionality" because the movement is from the SAP macro-economic influence to "a situation where the North chooses partners according to whether they fulfil certain other essential criteria". Even if these criteria are highly desirable, and even shared by the developing countries, the problem here is that it is still the North the one "doing the choosing" (King, 1999:17). While encouraging the introduction of notions such as 'good governance', 'democracy' or 'human rights' the donors continue to convey the idea that they "know best". The issue here is not whether these ideas are good or not, the problem is that its imposition damages the sovereignty of those who have to adopt it. In this context, Emma Crewe and Elizabeth Harrison (1999: 70) assert that "the good governance and aid

conditionality imply a clear acknowledgment of unequal power- 'We have the money, you want it, so you had better behave as we think correct'". This fact turns problematic the assumption of teamwork between equals.

As it has been revealed, partnership has not appeared without critiques. There are reasons to be sceptical towards this new humble and self-effacing role from the donors in this new manner of relating North and South, and the many arguments sustaining the discursive nature of the partnership. German and Randel (2000) claim that in practice, ownership is too often just 'nominal', but that this is not surprising due the lack of capacity that makes it difficult to recipient governments to design their own policies and to appropriate their development process (see Vestbø, 2003 who provides an example of this). Wyn Courtney (1999:127), a staff member of UNESCO, remarks that the diminishing amounts of ODA are inferior to the promised offer and often comes with conditions; "partnership thus remains at the level of formalities and diplomatic niceties, whereas direct questions or recriminations about obligations, from either side, are avoided". Some years after the terms partnership, capacity building and local ownership appeared on the scene, it is possible to find evidence that the partnership is not as genuine as intended.

In the first place it is noteworthy that once again, it is the donor community –or 'Northern partner'- who sets the rules of the game. One of the paradoxes of all this partnership movement is that even if the donor is eager to share responsibility and give the ownership of projects to the recipients, it is still a donor resolution, and it was them who took the initiative. In any case, the donors construct the new paradigm and 'allow' the recipient countries to raise their voices, reflecting the power imbalance that characterizes the aid.

The editors of *The Reality of Aid Project* (Randel et al. 2000: xii) affirm that "partnership is hardly possible in the face of growing inequity, with developing countries governments being asked to sign up to conditions rather than consensus". Although the idea is a better coordination among donors to respond to the local government's plans, each bilateral agency has its reasons to defend their own agendas as a means to be accountable for its taxpayers. In order to achieve this, they can point to the possibility of the poor effectiveness or the corruption of the recipient government, and by focusing on their objectives undermine the local ownership.

Joel Samoff (2004) gives another example of the continued donor-driven model despite the partnership discourse. He refers to the complications to establish an effective dialogue between the African governments and their development partners. "Often, the agencies' manner is more akin to instruction than discussion" (p.414) and the donors

agencies will consult the opinion of the Southern partners once the ground decisions are already taken.

Hjertholm and White, (2000:84-5) give more examples of the power of decision of the developed countries and declare that "although donors increasingly talk of partnership and the need for recipient ownership, they are in fact reluctant to allow recipients more than a limited role". Kayizzi-Mugerwa (1998) claims that "the equal partnership envisaged is far from that understood in business: donor budgets will no doubt continue to determine the terms of engagement" (p.224). Facts like this make us suspect that all this rhetoric is just a new name for old practices.

2.2.6 The unacknowledged asymmetry

The rhetoric of equality is the basis of partnership, in which the donors try to back off and give more responsibility and the protagonist role to the South. However, the previous examples give us an idea of how the faculty of decision and influences are unbalanced. The very fact that one of the 'partners' is the owner of the financial resources establishes an unavoidable, disempowering and unequal relationship that counters the symmetry that the partnership discourse proclaims (Brock-Utne, 2000), especially if the resources flow is always in the same direction. "The idea that money automatically confers power on people is apparently reflected in the control that aid donors have over aid recipients" (Crewe & Harrison, 1999:47).

Even more serious than the latent imbalance in the aid relationship is the attitude of ignoring it. John Degnbol-Martinussen and Poul Engberg-Pedersen (2003) affirm that "today, there is a widespread tendency to obscure the actual power relationship by using words and formulations to make it appear that foreign aid comprises collaboration between equal partners" (p.1). Crewe & Harrison put it like this: "it is rarely recognized by donors that their relationship with recipients cannot be a meeting of equals" (p.74).

This evading position of the external partners is evidenced in their assumption that aid is free of conflict and that their main task is to mobilize enough resources and to find the best strategies. Like the ostriches, they put their head in the sand and do not want to face the conflicts. The talk of partnership often fails to address potential conflict and inequalities.

The lack of acknowledgement of this imbalanced relationship has two sides. The first is their potential risk, because there is "no recognition that the unequal power relations can be the greatest obstacle to economic, social and political change, and that progress, especially for the resource-weak groups, require that these groups be strengthened politically in relation

to those in power" (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003:5). This is also in detriment of the impact of the development process, because the work is founded on unrealistic assumptions. Consequently, many recommendations about partnership, by both practitioners and academics, have more to do with management of projects than with challenging power relations (Crewe & Harrison, 1999:75). The other side refers to the opportunities that accepting the unequal relationship could bring. In this sense, both sides can organize their efforts based on the awareness of a "conflict-filled and power struggle" (p.5) in a more realistic base.

2.2.7 The power unbalance and the subtle use of power

I have problematized the lack of official recognition of the unbalanced power relationship, where the North is in a dominating position vis-à-vis the South. However, whether the donors acknowledge it or whether they exercise this power consciously are two different things. To the latter issue, Rita Abrahamsen (2004) provides a new framework to analyze the power relationship. She certainly admits that power is present in the association between donors and recipients, but it should not be restricted only to terms of coercion and domination. "Instead, the power of partnerships is voluntary and coercive at the same time, producing both new forms of agency and new forms of discipline" (p.1454).

In a much synthesized way, and taking the risk of oversimplifying what Rita Abrahamsen asserts, her main statement is that the power in the partnership relationship should not be conceptualized as a type of domination in a classical way, in the form of: "the ability of A to get B to do what B would not otherwise do" (p.1458). Rather, she defends an alternative definition, where power means " 'A may exercise power over B by getting him to do what he does not want to do, but he also exercises power over him by influencing, shaping or determining his very wants' " (p.1458). In this process, freedom is used as means of giving the recipient countries the responsibility for their own development, but in reality what happens is that they have already internalized the good governance discourse and "poor countries are prevented from realizing their 'real' interests due to the hegemonic ideology of neo-liberalism" (p.1459).

Following this argument, partnerships are a way of influencing a country's development choices more effectively. In this sense, the definition that Jacques Foster (1999) gives of a developed country could not fit better: " 'developed' countries are those that had the ambition to have other countries adopt their development model and the resources to persuade them to do so" (p. 35). As if giving more weight to the argument, this is very

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eloquently expressed by a donor referred to by Helleiner (2000): "ownership exists when they [the recipients] do what we [the donors] want them to do but they do so voluntarily" (p.2). Helleiner (2000) goes on to say that donors have not just kept their basic recipe for development-oriented reform, now they "want local policymakers not simply to *do* what it recommends but also to *believe in* it" (p.3).

2.2.8 The other side: the South

Until now, I have been discussing the contrast between rhetoric from the donors and the reality, as reported by some academics. However, recipients, or the Southern partner according to the partnership language, have their own interpretation of what happens and act according to it. In words of Emma Crewe and Elizabeth Harrison (1999) "the recipients' perspective is characterized by an exasperation with the arrogance of donors who, they often argue, feel it is their duty to develop the backward South, impose their decisions through a promise of aid, and give little respect to national experts" (p.76).

I have already portrayed the donor discourse, how they are -at least in the official rhetoric- willing to step back and give the starring role to the South. But we have also seen some evidence that it actually does not happen. This feeling is articulated in a clear declaration of a southern partner: *'Donors want countries in the driver's seat, but want to keep the road map.'* [6]

It is not surprising then that in this shift of agenda, recipients could be sceptical when the donors are telling them to take the initiative and have some power of decision-making.

> Since few donors are taking any steps to stand back and allow developing country governments room to manage and 'own' their development programmes, ownership may be seen by southern governments as another donor "hoop" held up for them to jump through (German & Randel, 2000:19).

This is also the reason why Helleiner (2000) talks about a certain resentment, tension and anger on the part of recipient countries. In response to this, there are some mechanisms practiced by southern partners when interacting with their Norther partners. Examples of this are the 'need tailoring' (Samoff, 2003) or learning quickly donor psychology, the new 'buzz' words" (Birgit Brock-Utne, 2000: 271).

Do things always happen in the way it has been described? Although it is recognized that the North has set the rhythm of this partnership dance, we have to explore what the reactions are in the South. Do they have an active role or just a reactive one? The partnership arena has several levels: from the macro level of policy making that concerns

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[6] Commentary by a participant of the OECD Development Partnership Forum 2000, in Paris, December 2000 quoted in The Reality of Aid available in http://www.devinit.org/realityofaid/kpolchap.htm

ministries and bilateral agencies, to the grassroots practice in a rural village implemented by a local and a Northern NGO. At each one of these levels, recipients have a space to act, although it may be rather limited.

Standing in a different position in this exchange implies a different understanding of the process. Crewe and Harrison (1999) note that "while developers speak in terms of self-reliance and imparting knowledge, local people recognize projects as a source of resources to be used to meet immediate needs" (p.157).

2.3 NGOs for development

So far I have discussed the issues concerning partnership between multilateral agencies and national governments in a macro perspective.   From now on, attention will be centred in a more concrete form of partnership, namely, the one that engages the efforts of Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) from the North and the South.

2.3.1 The diversity of the NGO sector

What is an NGO?   From a simplistic point of view, the name says what it is not: an organization attached to the government, which could be understood as organizations of the civil society. This "extremely diverse group" (Lewis, 1998: 503) includes organizations that can take almost any form, from churches to worker unions or sport clubs. However, in this study it is necessary to use a more specific definition or description of a more limited group of NGOs that are development-oriented. According to Riddell & Robinson (1995:26) "the term NGDO -non governmental development organization- is frequently used to describe the growing numbers of associations whose work is exclusively concerned with broader development concerns". NGDOs "focus on the economic, political and cultural development for specific groups of people" (Degnbol-Martinuseen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003:143). For simplicity reasons, these organizations will purely be called NGOs in this study.

Still, for their definition, many authors agree in that these organizations are so diverse that generalizations or an accurate definition are difficult or even impossible to make (Dale, 2000; Degnbol Martinuseen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003; Elu & Banya, 1999; Lewis, 1998; Riddell & Robisnon, 1995; Tvedt, 1998). Some have tried to conceptualize and describe them in a broad sense, according to their main common characteristics. For example, Dale (2000: 53) says that NGOs "tend to have a well specified mission, they usually provide services that are considered as professional (requiring specialized skills for rendering them) they have clearly identifiable formal structure, they normally work with at least some salaried staff, and they often render support to other organizations (mostly community-based

organizations, but also others, even governmental agencies)". Other authors highlight the simple concern for other people as the "hallmark" of the NGOs (Edwards & Hulme, 1992). Elu & Banya (1999) depict the essential characteristics of NGOs:

- *Voluntary*- formed voluntarily and the participation of its members is voluntary. Riddell & Robinson (1995) agree in the voluntary component as the key feature.
- *Independent*- controlled by those who formed it.
- *Non-to-profit*- not for personal private gain, although there are employees and NGOs do not distribute revenues to the stakeholders.
- *Altruistic*- in aims and related values and aims to improve the circumstances of weak groups of society.

On the other hand, their diversity depends on other kinds of features, such as the reasons to be formed, the activities they carry out, or the kind of beneficiaries they have. Other differences are their size and constitution, function and location, their approach and orientation, the physical, financial and technical resources, the scale of interventions, the degree of support they receive from government, and the socio-political context of their interventions (Riddell & Robinson, 1995). Some of these features are represented in Figure 2.1, as characteristics that the NGOs have and can be located in a continuum.

Figure 2.1 Broad characteristics that differentiate NGOs for development
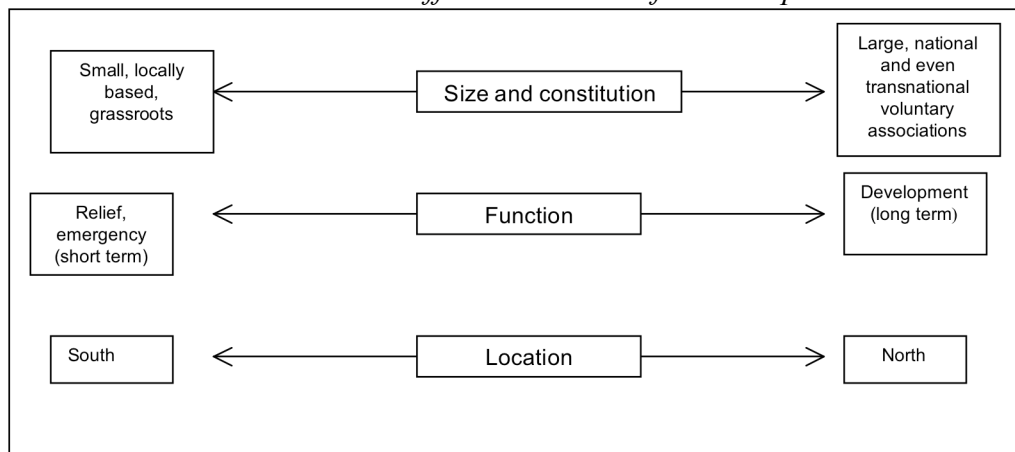
2.3.2 NGO typologies

The attribute called 'location' in Figure 2.1 brings us to the two important groups of NGOs that concern to this study. There is a consensus in the distinction between 'international' or Northern NGOs and 'intermediary' or 'national', Southern NGOs (Edwards & Hulme, 1996; Lister, 2000; Lewis, 1998 & Padrón, 1987,). Again, these can take many labels and names. What I will call Northern NGOs (NNGOs) takes also the names of non-national NGOs, or

International Development Cooperation Institutions just to give some examples. NNGOs "have their roots in industrialized countries but undertake development or emergency relief work in aid recipient countries" (Lewis, 1998: 503) and according to Riddell and Robinson (1995: 27) there is often a "strong church-based link of the major NNGOs".

On the other hand, what in this study will be defined as Southern NGOs (SNGOs) "have emerged locally in the countries where NNGOs are active" (Lewis, 1998: 503) and can be identified as well as 'national NGOs' or 'indigenous NGOs'. For a more accurate description that is contextualized to the Latin American reality, Padrón (1987) defines SNGOs as "one form of NGO devoted specifically to the design, study and/or execution of development programs and projects in Third World countries, with the support of international development cooperation institutions and the direct involvement of the popular sectors" (p.70). For Riddell & Robinson (1995) "a typical SNGO is [often] a small agency with a handful of staff working in a cluster of villages in a particular locality … engaged in promoting self-help activities, service provision, community organization, and poverty alleviation with funding from foreign NGOs and, in some cases, government sources" (p.33).

Other relevant components in development cooperation at the local level are the Grassroots Organizations (GRO) or Community based organizations (CBOs) (Edwards & Hulme, 1996 & Padron, 1987). Despite their importance, they are not the focus in this partnership case study.

The decade of the 1980s has been called the 'NGO decade' (Postma, 1994:448). This is due to the increasing interest in the work of NGOs as a consequence of the failure of the national states' development approaches (Lewis, 1998), together with the trend to support the private sector. During these years, the NGOs have suffered transformations and have evolved, being classified by Korten (1987, in Degnbol- Martinuseen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003) into four generations. In a very brief description, the NGOs of the first generation were mainly emergency relief and missionary organizations; in the second generation, NGOs moved to a help to self-help approach, namely, to strengthen the target group's own capacity for them to care for themselves in the long run, working locally; the third generation NGOs criticized the limitations of working exclusively at the a local level, whereas they intended to attack problems in a larger scale in order to change structures, influence policies and strengthen capacity of the southern partners; the fourth generation is differentiated from the third in that they strive for operating within national and global networks.

NGOs are considered to have a comparative advantage in contrast to the state and the larger multilateral official aid organizations. They have shown better capacity to reach the poor and being innovative in their working strategies, and this is the reason why some national governments are using NGOs as instruments to execute official development programs. Degnbol-Martinuseen & Engberg-Pedersen (2003:157) point out the elements of the comparative advantage of NGOs as follows:

- Flexible, less bureaucratic and adaptable to changes and local conditions
- Staff motivated by idealism
- Close cooperation with local groups , able to learn from the partners
- Political independence, that allows them to work in sensitive zones where official donors have to be cautious
- Can create alternative development models, inspired by partners in the South
- Motivated to work in remote regions

As it has been described before, the aid for development is a complex system. Figure 2.2 represents the process of aid channelling and the interaction between the different actors i.e. NNGOs, SNGOs, states, aid agencies, GROs and local authorities.

Figure 2.2 NGOs choice of partners and forms of cooperation
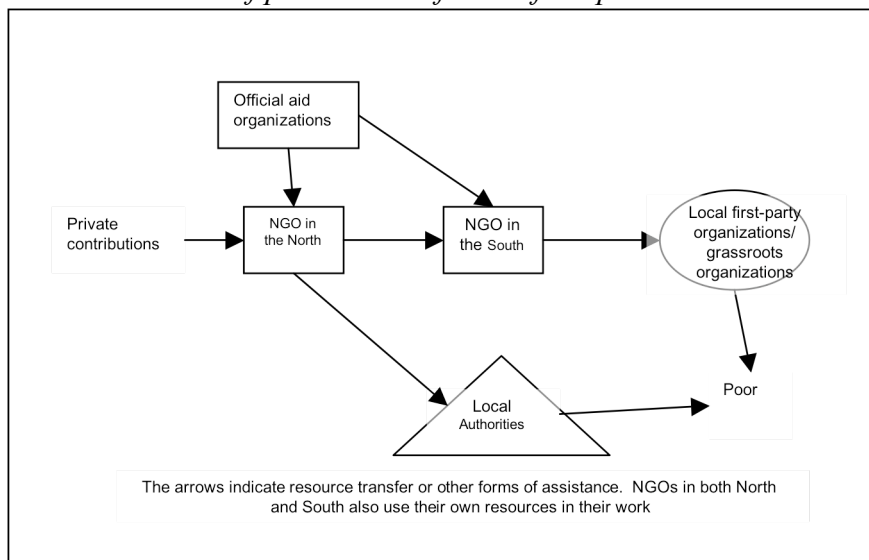
Source: adapted from Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen 2003, p. 147

From the figure, the concrete relationship that attracts our attention is the NNGO-SNGO link. The relationship of the NNGOs toward the SNGOs is defined, to a large extent, by an important distinction among NNGOs; whether they are operational or not. Operational agencies use to execute projects directly in developing countries using their own staff and resources, whereas non-operational agencies finance projects from their headquarters or regional office, often channelling funds through partner organizations with whom special relationships are frequently developed (Riddell & Robinson, 1995:28). The non-operational

approach, according to Riddell and Robinson (1995), is preferred in South Asia and Latin America, in contrast with the operational model more used in Africa; unfortunately, the authors do not provide the reasons for that.

The recent tendency for NNGOs has been to give fewer resources directly to the target group –the poor- and instead they collaborate with local organizations in the South through SNGOs. Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen (2003) maintain that "the large NNGOs most often use a many-stringed cooperation strategy that, in addition to the cooperation with the Southern NGOs, and small local organizations, involves cooperation with local governments on specific development activities" (p.148).

2.3.3 NGOs and education

From all these positive characteristics of NGOs derives the important role that they can play in the domain of education and development (cf. UNESCO, 2001 for a good report in this area). Referring to the same matter, Collette Chabbott (2003) cites a conference entitled 'A statement of Principles on the involvement of NGOs in the World Conference of Edcation For All. Follow-up activities with Non-NGO bodies' where it was declared that "NGOs shall be part of all formal structures for the implementation of EFA at all levels: local, national, regional and international…" (p.60). Nevertheless, what NGOs can do for education is not restrained to the developing countries. NGOs in the North can play an important role educating their own societies, for example, as opinion-makers when informing them about their experiences and beliefs about the south, or creating understanding of foreign cultures or speaking out for their Southern partners (Malhotra, 2000).

2.3.4 The need of North-South collaboration

As discussed in the previous section, this call for partnership was a "back to basics strategy" (Kayizzi-Mugerwa 1998:222), that ideally gives more responsibility to the South for its own development and supposedly releases them from conditionalities imposed from the North, and a change in the visibility of the North in the South. This is what Wohlgemuth (1998:42) called 'a real negotiation where both parties give and take and where no one dictates the conditions for the other". Beyond relationships in a macro perspective, this partnership would signify a change in the relationships between the Southern and Northern NGOs, as well as in the role they play in the development arena.

This discussion started to take force in 1987, in a conference in London launched by the journal *World Development* (discussed in Degnbol-Martinuseen & Engberg-Pedersen,

2003, Elu & Banya, 1999 & Postma, 1994) where representatives of NNGOs and SNGOs reunited to deliberate how their relationships would be defined in the light of the partnership approach. The concern then was to replace aid with cooperation based on equality, where NGOs in the South took a leading role in determining development priorities and the relationship could really take the shape of a genuine partnership. Juliet Elu and Kinsgsley Banya (1999) explain that this partnership between Northern and Southern NGOs would "enhance the significance of transparency, equality and mutual accountability" (p.191) and that the UNDP "felt that highlighting institutional development as a specific objective of the partnership would help transmit needed management, monitoring and network skills". It was, according to these authors, the first time that the relationship "was moving to a more collaborative model, away from the assistantial one" (Elu & Banya, 1999: 194). In the special issue of the journal *World Development* of December 1987, Drabek (1987), the managing editor, reported that

> …it was suggested that a positive North/South collaborative relationship should include: mutual respect, trust, and equality; transparency or reciprocal accountability; understanding of each others' political/economic/cultural contexts and of institutional constraints; openness to learning from each other; and a long term commitment to working together. (p. x)

In this way, after the recognition of the South's growing leadership capacity, their knowledge and expertise would be better used, "welcoming the NNGOs' collaboration, -not initiative- in the process" (Elu & Banya, 1999:192). There are other practical reasons to move the NGOs collaborations into the partnership modus, as the cost-effective character of collaboration, the better access to local knowledge and the communities, the cultural sensitivity of the Southern partner or the assumption that complex problems need several points of view for their solution. In this context, each partner would give their contribution: from the South, contextualized skills, from the North, funds, human resources skills and technical know-how (Elu & Banya, 1999). An interesting observation about the flow of resources from South to North, Riddell and Robinson (1995) mention concepts such as 'empowerment' and 'concientization', developed in Brazil by Paulo Freire, or the participatory approaches in development born in India. Such themes were adopted by Northern NGOs, and they have included them as an integral part of their agendas, encouraging other partners to embrace them.

The Latin American contribution in this issue of the *World Development* journal was made by Mario Padrón (1987), who identifies different forms in which the cooperation takes place. He describes different situations, one in which the SNGOs are considered by the

NNGOs as a necessary evil to reach the poor, and the SNGOs just want 'the gringos' to give them the money and respect their autonomy. In other situations, the SNGOs are pressed between the interest of both NNGOs and Grassroots Organizations (GROs), taking many functions of the former and trying to represent the latter. However, he considers a third kind of situation, a more balanced one, which moves toward a true partnership away from a donor-recipient model. In this situation, the SNGO is "considered as one of the three partners in the development cooperation process" (p.74). This relationship is characterized by more give and take, involves longer-term commitments beyond the limited project approach, and responsibility shared among the three partners. One of the advantages of this kind of relationship for SNGO is less economic uncertainty. This collaboration is represented by "P" in the Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3 Partnership
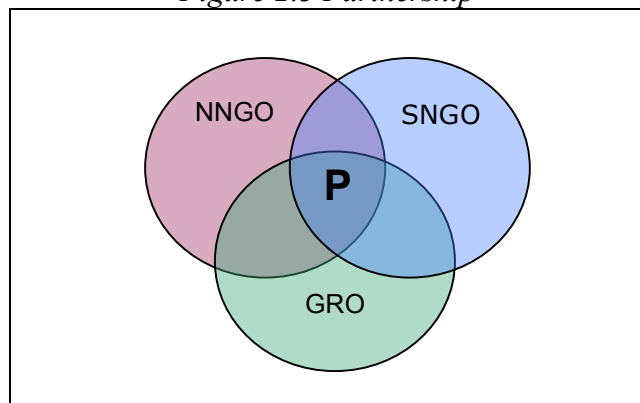
Source: Adapted from Padrón, (1987: 73)

2.3.5 Understanding partnership

Almost two decades have passed since the London conference, and the reality is that the envisaged partnership is still not attained. Nonetheless, academics and practitioners continue to write about partnership in attempts to better understand it and define the necessary elements to achieve it. For example, Mullinix, (2002) cites some key elements of effective collaboration identified by Patterson, Machelli and Pacheco (1999, cited in Mullinix, 2002: 78): 1) mutual trust, 2) honest communication, 3) common goals, 4) flexible governance, 5) positive tensions, and 6) a culture of inquiry. In addition, the authors identify structural characteristics that support partnership: projects, new roles, realistic expectations and perspectives; significant and equivalent reward structures; and opportunities for sharing and discussion.

Based on several researchers, Sarah Lister (2000:228) identifies the following elements present in any 'successful' partnership:

- mutual trust, complementary strengths, reciprocal accountability, joint decision-making and a two-way exchange of information (Postma, 1994, p. 451);
- clearly articulated goals, equitable distribution of costs and benefits, performance indicators and mechanisms to measure and monitor performance, clear delineation of responsibilities and a process for adjudicating disputes;
- shared perceptions and a notion of mutuality with give-and-take;
- mutual support and constructive advocacy, and
- transparency with regard to financial matters, long-term commitment to working together, recognition of other partnerships.

According to Lister (2000), the cooperation between the North and the South has as an advantage a better use of limited resources, together with "increased sustainability and improved beneficiary participation in development activities" (p.228). Moreover, the synergy produced by the shared effort gives outcomes that none of the partners would have obtained alone (Brown, 1990 in Lister 2000; UNESCO, 2001). Interdependence is then, a crucial aspect in a partnership relationship. To this respect, Juliet Elu and Kingsley Banya (1999) are very eloquent when saying:

> both types of organizations need each other to provide assistance for sustainability and capacity building in developing countries, and future relationships between the two kinds of non-governmental organizations may become collaborative out of necessity. The North cannot and should not develop the South without the input and active participation of SNGOs. On the other hand, the Southern needs Northern resources, both technical and financial in the development of the South (p.203).

Together with the mentioned efforts to understand and portray partnership, some other authors have tried to describe and categorize the kind of relationship that NNGOs and SNGOs sustain. Table 2.1 presents the typology of these relationships in an idealized manner, where the elements of each category, of course, can be combined.

Table 2.1 Typology of North-South collaboration

Typology of North-South collaboration
Contracting: In which a NNGO pays an independent NGO to provide a well defined package of services under conditions established largely by the Northern NGO. This is an example of free-service exchange
Dependent franchise: in which a formally independent NGO will function as a field office of a NNGO which provides most or all of its direction and funding
Spin-off NGO: In which a dependent franchise or NNGO field office is expected over time to become organizationally and financially independent of the NNGO
Visionary patronage: In which Northern and Southern NGOs with a shared vision of development jointly agree on goals, outcome measures and reporting requirements for a programme which the SNGO implements and the NNGO supports with funds and resources
Collaborative operations: in which both the Northern and the Southern NGOs share decision-making power over planning and implementation of joint programmes implemented by the SNGO with funding and technical support from the NNGO
Mutual governance: In which the NNGO and the SNGO each have decision making power, or at least substantial influence, over each other's policies and practices at both the organizational and programme levels
Sustainable development: in which the SNGOs are fully responsible for all aspects of project development and implementation without NNGO involvement. This is the ideal typical model of most Southern NGOs

Source: adapted from Leach, 1994 in Elu & Banya, 1999:197

2.3.6 Models of partnership

Mullinix (2002) presents an equally interesting attempt to understand partnership in order to nurture it. He describes a model of partnership developed as a result of the experiences and lessons learned by a USAID funded NNGO, working in partnership with different SNGOs dedicated to education in a five year long project in Namibia. With this model, constructed in collaboration between the Northern and Southern NGOs, it was intended to identify the different forms that partnership can take, depending on the actual situation of each organization.

The model was built upon the idea that partnership is a dynamic process that can move along a continuum, between a 'pre-partnership', a 'partnership' and a '**P**artnership' phase, but not necessarily in a linear or a progressive sense. In addition to these phases, nine dimensions were defined as indicators of the kind of partnership in which each organization finds itself. In this way, the continuum model gave the NNGO a framework to construct a partnership with the different SNGOs, according to their needs and the situation of their organizational development. Based on this, it is argued that "the optimal relationship in any partnership process is one that encourages NGOs to maintain a relationship with the partner organization that best suits their needs at a particular stage and time in their organizational development" (Mullinix, 2002: 80). It is important to underline that the NNGO was always conscious of the power unbalance that the partnership between funding and funded institutions represents. To attenuate these differences, it was decided to replace the monetary aspect of 'value' to a broader concept that included the resources that each partner could contribute with.

For the people's participation in the conception of this model, what was important in the identification of different forms of partnership is the potential to better understand them, paying attention to and nurturing the specific features of each one. Moreover, the partnership is meaningful only if its outcome is the empowerment of the individuals and the communities, but sufficient time is necessary for achieving this. Thinking back, the presentation of this model in this study is due to the usefulness it can provide in identifying the particularities of the studied case, and eventually determine in which stage the partnership between the Peruvian and the Norwegian NGO finds itself.

Table 2.2 'Partnership development continuum' 7

Dimension	Description	**Pre**-partnership phase	**P**artnership Phase	**P**artnership phase
(1) Focus of Interaction	The primary purpose behind the partnership	Getting to know each other	Working to achieve mutually valued objectives	Developing and implementing programs together
(2) Activities/ Projects/ programs	The work undertaken during the course of the partnership	*Limited* - specifically defined relationships which allow organizations to become acquainted with each other	*Opportunistic* - organizations work together because it is convenient and appropriate (a good match)	*Integral* – organizations develop joint programs or activities that grow directly out of common skills and interests
(3) Time and Orientation	The length of time and orientation of the association	Short-term, nonspecific	Specified/longer-term, objective/activity oriented	Open-ended goal/mission oriented
(4) Benefit	The benefits accrued to partners	*Increased Networking-* Organizations develop relationships and skills	*Increased Capacity-* Organizations are able to do more and/or access more resources than they could alone.	*Increased Status* - Organizations are able to become more than what they would be alone
(5) Trust and Respect	The development, extent and locus of trust and respect between partner organizations	Building trust and earning respect	Trust and respect exist among a limited number of key staff members	Mutual trust and respect throughout partner organizations
(6) Organizational Structures	The degree to which organizational structures are autonomous or integrated	Completely autonomous	Separate but coordinated	Appropriately integrated (e.g. exchange of staff/board)
(7) Organizational Strategies and Information Access	The degree to which partners coordinate their organizations strategies and share information	Separate strategies Public information shared	Separate but coordinated development and pursuit of strategies Proprietary information exchanged	Proprietary information and strategies developed and marketed together
(8) Locus of Influence	How organizations utilize and conceptualize their locus of influence to promote individual or partner-based interests	Separate	Shared or differentiated according to expertise and capacity	Integrated, with acknowledgment of expertise and capacity
(9) Written Agreements or Contracts	the existence and/or focus of written agreements between partners.	None	Written agreements or contracts focusing on the specific roles of each organization in the implementation of a given project/ activity	Written agreements or contracts highlighting broad areas of mutual interest and commitment to work together.

Source: adapted from Mullinix (2002)

This is a very complete model of partnership. Two other models to describe partnership are represented by the works of Maxwell & Riddell (1998) and Lewis (1998). In the first example, Maxwell & Riddell (1998) rank the types of partnership from 'weak' to 'strong' and give some elements that distinguish them. The authors argue that the weaker

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[7] This is designed through collaborative consultation between Bonnie Mullinix, Leslie Long and Martin Tjituka with input from other local NGO staff, African NGOs and World Education staff.

model has been preferred by donors, since the element of committing to long term financial agreements is more difficult to accomplish, leaving the recipients dependent on donors decisions for funding.

Figure 2.4 Elements of partnership

Elements of partnership	
Model of partnership	Elements of partnership
Weak	Information sharing Policy dialogue
Strong	Jointly agreed country programmes Multi-annual financial agreements

Source: Maxwell & Riddell, 1998:260

The second example is provided by David Lewis (1998). In a very brief way, he describes the partnerships as moving from a 'dependent' to an 'active' status. The 'active' partnerships are based on "negotiation, debate, occasional conflict, and learning through trial and error" (p.504), where risks are taken and there is flexibility to adapt to needs. On the other hand, 'dependent' partnerships are more rigid, and there is a more or less fixed belief of comparative advantage, where NGOs can be seen as instruments to accomplish other's agendas. These three models will be used to understand the case studied.

2.3.7 Partnership as institutional development or capacity building

In order to attempt to move away from the donor-recipient model, NNGOs have sought to redefine their relationship with SNGOs through "capacity-building", (Lewis, 1998:504) "away from the simple transfer of skills and resources towards building autonomy and self-reliance" (Sahley, 1995, in Lewis, 1998:505). Capacity building is what, in the beginning of the partnership discourse, was referred to as institutional development. Together with institutional development, Elu and Banya (1999) consider the terms 'institutional development' and 'partnership' like synonyms; this reflects the significance that capacity building has in the construction of partnership. In this study 'institutional development' will be paralleled to 'capacity building' considered as major components of partnership, not as synonyms to it. Donors see capacity building as a "support to national and local ownership and control of the resources that are transferred as part of development co-operation" (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003:35). At the NGO level, this means the strengthening of skills and constructing the path to sustainability.

In his study on NGOs partnerships in Mali and Niger, William Postma (1994) gives examples of how, despite the discourse and the fact that institutional development is essential to build partnership between Northern and Southern organizations, many NNGOs do little to foster it with their Malian and Nigerien partners, usually doing the work themselves due to the lack of capacity in the South. In cases like this, Postma (1994) points out the risk of a "disguised northern manipulation of southern NGOs, particularly if institutional development is left merely to evolve on its own" (p.467). There is pressure upon SNGOs to attain quick results, which make NNGOs do most of the job themselves, hindering their purpose of developing capacity in their southern partners.

In his article "Development NGOs and the Challenge of Partnership: Changing relations between North and South", Lewis (1998) points out the weakness of the discourse of capacity building. He says that this discourse is increasingly unconvincing because it represents only a one-way flow of skills, assuming a comparative advantage of the North. In addition, "it is not always clear that NNGOs have anything to offer SNGOs besides money" (Lewis, 1998:505). According to Lewis this capacity building approach and the redefinition of functions has caused, to some degree, a certain identity crisis for the NNGOs, not only because their role in the South might not be justified once the SNGOs achieve the desired capacity and assume responsibilities that the NNGOs used to have, but because of the tendency of official agencies to fund SNGOs directly, not using NNGOs as intermediaries.

As stated, the adoption of partnership provoked a change in the roles of both NNGOs and SNGOs. As SNGOs have been taking more responsibility, NNGOs have diminished their activity at the field level in the South and started to serve as a "nexus between local and global actors and as carriers of new values and skills" (Elu & Banya, 1999:187). Furthermore, the SNGOs see the principal roles of their counterparts in the North as providing support and striving for policy changes in their home countries. In the new scenario, NNGOs would serve as a link to foster South-South exchanges. Thus, NNGOs have become messengers of the Southern causes, instead of being mere providers.

Nonetheless, one of the roles that the North still keeps is that of selecting the potential partners. They select the organizations "that fit with own ideas about a development worth working for … because most Northern NGOs –regardless of their declared respect for their partners' priorities- also base their work on certain ideologies and political ideas" (Degnbol-Martinussen& Engberg-Pedersen, 2003:36).

2.3.8 Power unbalance

Earlier in this chapter, I discussed the unequal position of the different partners in a macro perspective. At the more concrete level of the NGOs, things are not very different. Lewis (1998:504) claims that one of the problems with the term partnership is that "it is understood differently by organizations which have unequal power". In the already mentioned London conference, the frustration from the South was in "determining whether a true partnership can be built between the rich North and the impoverished South" (Elu & Banya p.194).

In a previous section, I mentioned that donor countries choose their partners according to the shared values and the fulfilment of partnership preconditions. In the NNGO-SNGO relationship this happens almost the same way. Degnbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen (2003) affirm that even NNGOs supporting the equality idea find it difficult to take it into the practice, stating that:

> Cooperation is seldom based on organizations in equal need of each other. Northern NGOs need partners in the South, of course, if they are not going to manage projects themselves, but this does not imply equality with the Southern NGOs, which generally have a more fundamental need for transfers of resources, knowledge and skills either from official organizations or Northern NGOs. In addition, the latter are generally much larger organizations than the ones they cooperate with in recipient countries. (p.148)

This statement is very well supported by what Elliott (1987) said almost sixteen years before the Danish authors: "There is an asymmetry of power [in a North South partnership] that no amount of well-intentioned dialogue can remove" (p. 65). He discussed the nature of the dialogue between partners, and recognizes that "this is a dialogue of the unequal, and however many claims are made for transparency or mutuality … the reality is - and is seen to be - that the donor can do to the recipient what the recipient cannot do to the donor" (p.65).

The inequalities are reinforced when Southern NGOs have to adapt to the bureaucratic structures that NNGOs have for managing the aid work, if they want to establish any cooperation (Degnbol-Martinussen, John & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003). This has been perceived by SNGOs as an erosion of their independence, but they have to accept it for economic reasons; it is often that SNGOs are exposed to considerable outside pressure and extra stress in their working conditions.

As it has been exposed, the power imbalance can take place at several levels and in different directions. For example, the work of Sarah Lister (2000) shows that there is a moment when a partner can turn to be both donor and recipient. This is a very frequent position of the NNGOs, due to the fact that in this chain of transfers, they receive funds from the bilateral agency of their country, but at the same time they provide aid to a Southern

NGO. In her study, Sarah Lister describes how a Northern NGO would adapt their priorities, and even those of their local recipients, to the mandates of the bilateral agency. This double-way flow of resources can also happen to the very bilateral agency, because in any case, their suppliers are the taxpayers of the countries. The issue here is a problem of accountability, because even if the poor people are the intended target, there is always a 'lower' or 'higher' position depending on the owner of the resources. Both levels are stakeholders to be accountable to.

Another aspect of the forms of cooperation that create difficulties for SNGOs is the imposition of norms and values by outside partners, as well as fluctuations in priorities influenced by what is 'in'. Since the end of the 1980s, there has been exerted pressure on Southern partners to make them live up to increasingly comprehensive demands, both regarding development goals and their internal organisation (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003). Postma (1994: 454) mentions the "uneven apportionment of failure and blame" present in North-South NGOs relationships: if the South fails, it is blamed, but if it succeeds, there is no recognition.

2.3.9 The importance of personal relationships

Another level in which power conflicts can take place is on a daily basis. In the book *Whose development?* (Crewe & Harrison, 1999) it is discussed the way in which the conflicts of partnership can occur in a more subtle way:

> [In the practice] numerous structures of power are at work, created partly by people's identity (gender, age, class, nationality, as well as race) and partly by their institutional position within development 'partnership' (junior/senior, donor/recipient, governmental/NGO (p.88)

The authors make reference to the silence around the fact that the identities of the practitioners are often bound up with nationality and race. They refer to these components as a heritage of colonialism.

To reinforce this idea of the importance of the personal relations between practitioners of development on a day-to-day basis, Wyn Courtney (1999) describes the little contact that external 'advisors' have with the Southern counterparts and argues that the frequency of that contact is a clue factor in building a good partnership. She claims:

> The inherently unequal and asymmetric donor-recipient relationship can only begin to approach that of partnership when there are almost daily contact, frank and honest exchanges of opinions and ideas, and recognition of sovereignty is absolute (p.127).

In the UNESCO Report about the *Support of NGOs to Education for All* (2001) some factors for a successful communication between partners are discussed. The first one is the "Communication that allows the identity of each to emerge" (p.17) that implies getting to

know the partners through the exploration of their identity, the context and the preoccupations of each other at all levels when discussing a common program. The second factor is the time that this communication takes. True communication is hindered by short visits of representatives or limited funding deadlines, which can be countered by more regular exchanges.

Some authors (Lister, 2000; Elliott, 1987, and Padron, 1987) approach the importance of the interpersonal relationships, when discussing the reasons of tensions between NNGOs and SNGOs. Brown, (1996, cited in Lister, 2000:229) concludes that "the stronger the personal relationship, the higher the levels of social capital available for co-operative problem-solving and the more easily gaps created by different levels of power and knowledge can be bridged".

2.3.10 The path to sustainability

Crewe and Harrison (1999: chapter 4) say that the new discourse of partnership, through the capacity building strategy, represented the solution against the lack of sustainability that provoked the collapse of projects once the expatriate assistants left the recipient country. This need of sustainability is triggered mainly by two reasons: the desire to transfer the project to the communities, with the withdrawal of the funding agency, and second, the desire to avoid dependence on an external agency (Riddell and Robinson, 1995: 35). This withdrawal represents the last of all phases planned from the beginning of the collaborations, i.e. entry, integration, consolidation and withdrawal (Fowler, 1997 in Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003:152). Sustainability is, then, a very important process for the life of the organizations upon which it depends that they continue fulfilling their goals.

Aldaba, Antezana, Valderrama & Fowler (2000) make an interesting analysis of what sustainability means in the context of a 'Beyond Aid Scenario' (BAS). They explore the situation in Central and South America, as well as in the Philippines, and they argue that despite the different conditions of their NGO sectors, self-sustainability remains a common priority. The authors claim that sustainability has to do with more than just money, and bring to the centre of the discussion two major factors: relational change and internal reform.

For the former, they mean that SNGOs have relied too heavily on foreign actors, which caused them a 'relational deficit'. This makes it necessary to turn their look back to local constituencies, fostering relationships with domestic agents that can eventually provide diverse resources. In this way, national NGOs would shape a new resource configuration. Aldaba et al. (2000) suggest a new resource mobilisation from the NGOs' surrounding

environment: 1) non financial support, like cost sharing with communities when they contribute, for example, with land or workforce; 2) self-generating income, when NGOs deliver services as consulting or training and 3) generating income from third parties, local authorities or philanthropic organizations.

The internal reform embraces the idea that sustainability goes beyond funding. According to this, the authors hold an integrated thinking about sustainability that involves a dynamic process of 'capacity'. Thus, the definition of organizational sustainability is: "the capacity of SNGOs to consolidate and to increase their interaction with society to fulfil their mission" (Aldaba et al.: 676). This capacity-based process is composed of the following variables: identity, management ability, good internal governance, strategic thinking, resourcefulness, ability to renovate, impact, transparency and accountability, ability to relate to its environment, and advocacy skills (Aldaba et al., 2000).

Kamal Malhotra (2000) provides another interesting view about sustainability in his article untitled "Beyond the Global Soup Kitchen". In the context of diminishing ODA, he projects an original scenario of the relationship between Northern and Southern NGOs without the aid variable and away from the resource transfer paradigm, concerning both Northern and Southern NGOs. Malhotra builds upon the widely spread idea that true partnership is not possible due to the inequality that the ownership of money implies. The originality of this analysis is that, far from seeing a non-aid relationship as a catastrophe, he sees the opportunities and positive outcomes of the evolution of NNGO-SNGO partnership and considers it a 'healthy transformation'. A very important point in his analysis is that without the resources transfer variable that enhances inequalities and gives more power to the Northern NGOs, it would be easier to find the path to a true partnership. With no money involved, no asymmetry.

Malhotra (2000), in contrast to Aldaba et al. (2000) does not focus on alternative funding sources when talking about sustainability. Rather, he centres the attention on the change of roles the organizations face, specially the NNGOs. To this respect, Malhotra's main point is that NGOs could set different priorities, like moving away from the service delivery function and emphasizing their 'societal watchdog' role, both in North and South. In addition, he claims that both Northern and Southern NGOs would be aware of the fact that they have the same kind of function in their respective homelands, recognising the similar problems at a global level and sharing strategies to attack them. This would be a partnership free of economic resource transfer.

After this optimistic view, and in a moment when we have not arrived yet to a beyond aid scenario, I present some factors that UNESCO has suggested in order to counter the unbalance between NNGO and SNGOs. According to its report, UNESCO (2001:17) considers dialogue as the pillar for organizations to understand each other and balancing the differences between partners. According to UNESCO (2001), based on case studies around the world, the basic components of this dialogue would be:

- *Communication.* Partnership is based on the principle of communication, which is crucial to viability, to ensuring success and efficacy, and to evaluating impact. The lack of real communication is the most frequent cause of failed projects or partnerships.
- *Willingness.* co-operation and partnerships achieve more than isolated efforts. As a strategy, partnership is a fundamental commitment borne out by practical experience. Where a partnership has been effective, it is because the partners were convinced that such a strategy would tackle the needs of education for all more appropriately than acting alone.
- *Time and energy* are required for the development of balanced and effective partnerships. This vision is based on a view of the virtues of human relations, which have multiple potentialities and are sources of synergy and mutual reinforcement, though each individual's difference is acknowledged and accepted. A partnership of this kind is based not on institutional arrangements, but principally on attitudes of trust and respect, and on the recognition of basic human dignity and the value of others. (p.17)

Conclusion

So far I have discussed partnership, its elements, some different ways to understand and conceptualize it and some related issues that can both enhance or hinder it. In the next chapter I will describe the actual partners in this case study and the context surrounding that specific relationship.

3. A case for partnership

This is a brief chapter, which has as a goal to present the actual partners interacting in this relationship, and describe how they stand in relation to each other. In the first section, I will briefly portray, at the global level, the position that Norway and Peru have as donors and recipients in the domain of aid for development. In the second part, I will describe the concrete case that includes the Northern and the Southern organizations that are studied.

3.1 The global context

3.1.1 Norway as a donor country

Norway has been portrayed as one of the donor countries that are the front runners in partnership. Kierman (2000) says that in spite of the pessimistic picture of the current ODA efforts, there are at least some countries that are enthusiastic advocates of partnership, of which Sweden and Norway are strong advocates. Nishigaki and Shimomura (1999:135) comment that "although the size of the aid given by Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland is not large [in absolute terms] these four Scandinavian countries are well known for their aid activities, and the clear rationale of their aid giving makes their presence felt".

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affaires (2004) states their support to the partnership strategy in a White paper called *Fighting Poverty together:*

> The Millennium Development Goals can primarily be achieved through a global partnership in which both the industrialized countries and the developing countries improve their policies. Global partnership is a key concept for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (p.14).

There are some documents referring to Norway as one of the developed countries that is "doing their homework" concerning the efforts toward basic education in developing counties. One of these documents is the Global Campaign for Education's (2003) *Must Try Harder Report,* which ranks Norway as the second best of 22 rich countries committed to education in poorer countries. Norway itself, in the already mentioned White Paper, states its position in the development arena:

> With its high level of development assistance as a percentage of GDP, Norway is a relatively influential player in the development policy arena. The usefulness of entering into alliances with likeminded countries to gain acceptance of Norway's ideas and experiences in a multilateral context must also be emphasized. Furthermore, Norway benefits from decisions being made in forums where as many countries as possible are included. Alliances are built with like-minded countries on an ongoing basis (p.8).

Appendix A presents an OECD (2004a) graph that shows Norway's performance as a donor, the sectors it supports and a list of the top ten recipients of Norwegian aid, who constitute the 'likeminded countries' mentioned in the White Paper. The high percentage of development

assistance given by Norway is represented in Figure 3.1, which shows the position of Norway in relation to the other DAC members, being the country who gives most if its Gross National Income to development aid, according to the OECD (2004b).

Figure 3.1 Net ODA in 2004- as a percentage of GNI
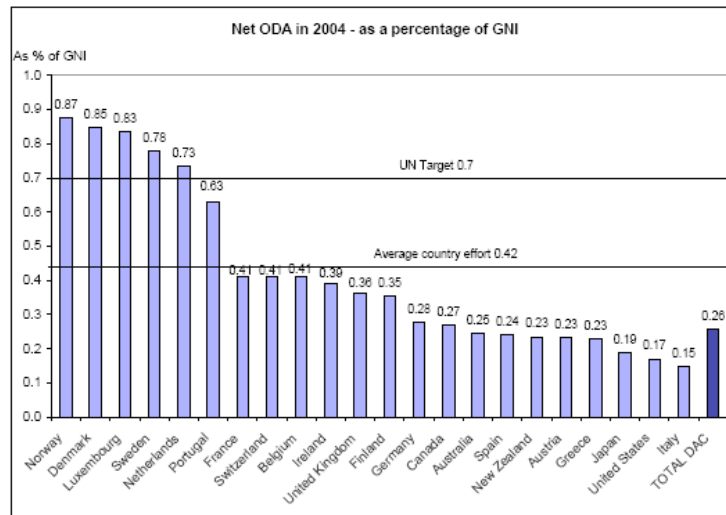
Source: OECD (2004b)◊

It has been argued that Norway's contribution to developing countries is moved primarily by humanitarian and altruistic reasons, which where discussed in the previous chapter. To this respect, Stokke (1989) states:

> The motives given by Norwegian development assistance have followed a consistent line from the very start, almost without regard to the changes in the political color of the government. Aid has primarily been justified by *altruistic arguments*, well attuned to the dominant socio-political norms and their social bearers, idealistic NGOs and particularities of the aid arena, and reinforced by the reference to Norwegian affluence. The predominance of altruistic arguments in the key documents is also matched in public opinion surveys; the reasons for giving aid have been mainly altruistic (p. 172).

This author bases his conclusions in the analysis made to the official Norwegian documents referring its role in the aid for development. However, it is important to remark that other reasons such as self-interest are discussed, but "even these political motives are directed towards international 'common good' objectives" (p.172). In the 2004 White Paper, which is a more recent document, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affaires (2004: 6) states the moral responsibility of Norway towards developing countries as follows: "as one of the richest countries in the world, Norway has a special responsibility in this regard. We all have a moral responsibility to combat injustice and promote development wherever we can".

◊ Although Finland was recognized by its role in aid for development, it is woth notingthat its performance does not reach that of the other Scandinavian nations.

3.1.2 Latin America and Peru as a recipients

On the other hand, Latin America is one of the regions that stands as an aid recipient. However, Aldaba, Antezana, Valderrama & Fowler (2000) refer to some of the reasons of the declining aid to Latin America, such as the growing competition for international funds between other regions. While the Eastern countries are shifting from being donors to be receivers, there is an increased attention to the African continent for humanitarian reasons, and the Middle East attracts funding for geopolitical interests, some parts of South America are "reaching a point where the traditional technical cooperation is no longer as necessary as it was once" (p.670). According to Aldaba et al. (2000), some South American NGOs are entering into the "beyond aid scenario" (BAS), facing both sustainability and a relational deficit. According to Negrón (2006), in 2003 the ODA for Latin America reached its lowest level, having 9% of the total ODA designated to the developing countries (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 ODA for Latin America as a percentage of the total ODA for developing countries

Source: DAC/OECD in Negrón (2006: 14)

In appendix A, I present a table showing the top ten donors to the Latin American region in 2003, as well as the top ten Latin American aid recipients (OECD, 2004c). In contrast to Norway as a donor, Peru, placed in the recipients group, is ranked in the DAC List of Aid Recipients (OECD, 2004d) as a *"Lower Middle-Income Country"* (LMICs), who had a GNI per capita between $746 and $2975 in 2003. In a study about the private support of European NGOs to twelve Latin American NGOs, Peru stands out as the first recipient being prioritized by European agencies, both in the amount of resources and in the amount of European agencies supporting the country in the period 1995-2004 (Biekart, 2006). However, the OECD (2004c) places Peru as the fourth Latin American recipient of aid in the top ten list.

Appendix A shows Peru's performance as ODA recipient (OECD, 2004e), indicating its top ten donors, in which the United States and Japan are the principal ones followed by other European countries as Germany and Spain.

3.1.3 Making connections

After presenting how Norway and Peru are placed in the aid for development arena at the global level, I consider it important to make some connections in order to understand this case. After taking a glance at the statistics, the first point that calls attention is that neither Peru is part of the "likeminded" partners of Norway, nor is Norway one of the main donors to Peru. Even if Peru is prioritized by the European Union, it is important to remember that Norway is not a part of this economic block. Concerning Latin America, the only two countries that Norway has official cooperation at the bilateral level are Nicaragua and Guatemala (NORAD, 2005), which indicates that Peru is not part of Norway's partner countries at the official national scale.

What I want to illustrate with the charts presented in this chapter and in appendix A, is that Norway and Peru are not traditional partners in development cooperation, as it would be in the case of Tanzania for Norway, or Spain or Germany for Peru, for example. This case study is thus, inserted in the context of an atypical relation, which is being free of, for example, ex-colonial interests as it would be the case of Spain providing aid to Peru. The rarity of the relation between a Norwegian and a Peruvian NGO was confirmed by a list of NNGOs working in Peru, that I obtained from the Peruvian Agency of International Cooperation (APCI) during fieldwork: it was only one Norwegian institution working among 117 registered NNGOs in 2005 (i.e. the NNGO of this case)[8].

3.2 The local context

It is important to describe the context in which this research takes place, which increases the transferability of the study.[9] In order to do so, this section is based on the content of categories derived from the analysis, which were called 'evolution of the relation' and 'organization's identity', as well on official organizational documents[10] and the websites of the NGOs.

Even though the Southern organization had no reserve in having their names published, I chose to give pseudonyms to the NGOs involved in the study. In this way, I assure confidentiality for both the Northern and the Southern NGOs. The NNGO or Northern partner will be called "the Norwegian Foundation" or simply "the Foundation". The pseudonym used to designate the Southern NGO will be "IntegrAndes". This name was

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[8] See Appendix A
[9] See chapter 4 for a broader discussion on transferability.
[10] These are considered internal documents, not mentioned in the reference list

chosen in collaboration with the SNGO's staff. The name is composed by "Integra" (to integrate), Andes (the region where they work), and "grandes" (big, grown). Apart from this name, the SNGO will be referred to as "the local organization" or the "southern partner".

IntegrAndes has collaborated for the last twelve years with the Norwegian Foundation to run different educational projects at the basic level in favour of children from rural areas (CODE, 2004). Their relation is based on five-year projects, which are renewed according to a diagnosis of needs in the region. Some times the projects vary in their strategy, their target communities and their scope. In addition to the projects, the institutions maintain a relation that includes a cultural exchange[11].

IntegrAndes is based in two different regions in Peru, each one with an installed office and a particular project. This organization works with the aim of improving the living conditions of the people that live in the mountains, having education as the main means. They do not work exclusively with schools, but also with parents and youngsters in the communities, in order to achieve a good use of the natural resources and for obtaining a sustainable development. Different workshops are offered to parents, some literacy courses are recently offered to the mothers, and the teachers also get trained for their jobs.

As their counterpart, the Norwegian Foundation defines itself as a development organization that works upon Christian values: Human dignity, justice, gender equality, participation, responsibility, transparency and sustainability. Their vision is "people living in freedom of poverty" and their overall strategy is to "create opportunities for the poor by sharing resources". The head office is located in the southern coast of Norway, and has about 30 employees. They co-work with partner organizations in the South. These regional offices or "competence-centres" are located in cities such as Lima in Peru, Bamako in Mali, Kampala in Uganda and Colombo in Sri Lanka, which are the decentralized organs of the institution. The Foundation stands for the idea that these centres understand the local situation and know how the aid will be best used, this is the reason why the Regional Offices are run by local people. Their selection criteria to choose partners are a common vision, values, strategies and experience. Together with partners who share their vision, the Foundation works to 'help people to help themselves'; they give poor people a starting help for them to keep going by themselves. Their motto is that small gifts can give the appearance of working well by a short period, but they do not contribute to development in the long run. What comes easy, goes easy. That is why they attempt to give possibilities to people to help

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[11] Very briefly described, the Foundation runs a youth program for young Norwegian volunteers who work with the partner organization for a period of around 8 months.

themselves in the long term. This is a private institution that is sustained by donations of the Norwegian public and NORAD's support. As shown in the previous section, Peru is not part of the official recipients of Norwegian aid; this is why the Foundation uses the resources produced by their fundraising at the private level to support their Peruvian partners. The relationship between the two organizations started in the early 1990's and since then they have evolved together. Along the data and analysis chapter I will describe and discuss the changes that the relationship has endured.

Conclusion

The value of this chapter resides in the possibility it brings to set the study case in its context. Thus, I have presented the partners of the case at the global and local level: Norway and Peru and their location in the international aid for development arena, as donor and recipient. I portrayed the relationship between these actors as rare, both at the macro and the micro level, assisted by the graphics presented in appendix A. I also introduced the main characteristics of the concrete NGOs whose partnership is studied in this case.

In the next chapter I describe the overall process of data gathering during the fieldwork, discussing essential aspects of the methodology such as the research design, the use of methods, the participants, my role as researcher and the ways to establish trustworthiness in the study. All these elements constitute the journey in the search for a partnership account.

4. Methodology: In the search for a partnership account

4.1 The research strategy

Defining a research strategy is intimately connected to the nature of research question of a study (Field & Morse, 1991 in: Morse, 1994:223). As it was stated in the previous chapters, my purpose when conducting this research is to explore how the partnership relationship is perceived from the point of view of the partner organizations themselves, in their own terms. From this account, it might be possible to find out whether the relationship has features more similar to a true partnership than to one based on rhetoric.

Given this research purpose, the broader approach that provides the framework for this study is a qualitative strategy of research, that stresses "the understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants" (Bryman, 2004:266). Opposite to the quantitative and positivistic approach that conceives reality as something static and definite (Durrheim & Terre Blanche, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1985), the purpose of qualitative inquiry is not to measure the reality or confirm a hypothesis. Rather, the qualitative methods are the most convenient in this case because with them, it is possible to study the reality as something alive and not static, where its participants have their own view and their interpretation of what the world is about. In this approach it is believed that people give meaning to their own experiences and perceptions, and according to Durrheim (2002), this interpretative paradigm "aims to explain the subjective reasons and meanings that lie behind social action" (p.6). In Bryman's (2004) words, "Interpretivism […]is predicated upon the view that a strategy is required that respects the difference between people and objects of the natural sciences and therefore requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action" (p. 13). More concretely, the interpretative approach that this study adopts is due to the aim of taking into account the perceptions of the informants, concerning how they experience being part of a partner relationship with the Northern NGO (NNGO).

Another feature of this study, as a qualitative one, is that it is outlined in a naturalistic way. This means that as a researcher, I do not pretend to manipulate the setting or the events, but as Patton (1990) states, "the point of using qualitative methods is to understand naturally occurring phenomena in their naturally occurring states" (p.41). The idea is then to study by first hand, *in situ*, how people in a Southern Non Governmental Organization (SNGO) experience the partnership relationship with a NNGO on a daily basis. Even though my intention is not to manipulate the circumstances of the phenomenon, this

does not mean that my role as a researcher has no effect in the study. Quite the opposite, qualitative research considers the "*researcher-as-instrument*, rather than relying on specialist tools and instruments" (Robson, 2002: 167), so that a "researcher's personal experiences and insights are an important part of the inquiry and critical to understanding the phenomenon" (Patton, 1990:40). This aspect of the study will be discussed more in depth in another section.

4.2 The design

Once the research question and the appropriate methodological strategy are defined –in chapter one-, it is time to have a more concrete plan: the design of the research. According to Durrheim and Terre Blanche (2002:29) "a research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research", that is, a plan of actions to collect and analyze data.

Designing a research project implies making decisions, concerning the kind of techniques to be used, the kind of information that can be collected with these techniques, to whom they will be applied, and in which way the information will be analyzed. These decisions have to be linked to each other in a coherent manner, related to the purpose of the study and the paradigm sustaining the research. In this respect, Durrheim and Terre Blanche (2002) state that "researchers achieve coherence design by ensuring that the researcher purposes and techniques are arranged logically within the research framework provided by a particular paradigm" (p. 35).

Before conducting fieldwork, the kind of information I had about the setting was a general knowledge of the work of both the Northern and the Southern NGOs linked by a partnership, but not actual details about their projects. For example, I was aware that the NNGO has a Regional Office in the capital city of the Latin American country, but I did not know what persons I might have access to. I did not have the exact wording of the questions to be asked, but I knew that I wanted to talk to the southern and northern NGOs' staff about their perception of the partnership relationship and related topics. I decided that using semi-structured interviews would be an effective technique to grasp the meanings of the people in their own terms, instead of, for example conducting a survey with closed questions and predefined categories. I considered that the use of more than one technique would enhance the validity of the study, because I could then crosscheck the information coming from different sources and in different forms; that is the reason for using participatory observation to complement the interviews. These are some of the broader decisions I made in advance to

the actual data collection, that were consistent with the qualitative methodology of inquiry. However, as qualitative designs are flexible, "more open, fluid and changeable, and are not defined purely in technical terms" (Durrheim, 2002:31), I remained open to the possibilities that could emerge once in the field, concerning informants, instruments and the kind of information that could be gathered.

4.2.1 The case study approach

As it was expressed in the introductory chapter, my Latin American background and my current residence in Scandinavia prompted my interest in studying a concrete partnership relationship between countries of these two regions, each one representative of the North and the South. This is the reason why the design of this research adopts the form of a *case study,* defined by Yin (1994) as "a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence" (p. 13)

But, what can be a case? A case can be a person, an event, a program, an organization, a time period, a critical incident, a relationship, a community, a school, a family, an institution, a neighborhood, an innovation, or a decision (Patton, 1990; Bryman, 2004). For identifying the unit of analysis, that is, the case, it is important to relate to the way the initial research question has been defined; indeed, the case study design is appropriate to "how" questions (Yin, 1994: 22), such as "how do the partners in the Southern NGO perceive this partnership relationship with the NNGO?"

Having described the motivations and the primary question for this research, the criteria for finding a case were a Norwegian NGO that had a relationship with a Latin American organization working for education and development; even more important, that the organizations claimed to have a cooperative relationship in terms of partnership. The level of the Non-Governmental Organizations was chosen due to its manageability, besides their possibility of reaching local people. The case of this study is not the organization itself, but the phenomenon of the partnership relationship between two organizations, one from the North and the other from the South.

The criteria referred to above are part of the purposive sampling used in the selection of this case study; this purposive sampling has as an objective "to select information rich cases whose study will illuminate the question under study" (Patton, 1990:169) and "allows us to choose a case because it illustrates some feature or process in which we are interested" (Silverman, 2000:104).

The logic and power of purposeful sampling lays in selecting *information-rich cases* for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term *purposeful* sampling (Patton, 1990:169)

The case study design is also appropriated to this study because no generalization is intended beyond this concrete case. Rather, it is aimed to look at the unique features, "the complexity and particular nature of the case in question" (Bryman, 2004:48) and explore whether a true partnership relationship is taking place. This case provides an apt context for working through the research question, and was selected because it "provides [a] suitable context for [the] research questions to be answered" (Bryman 2004: 51). At the same time, this study may produce knowledge that can be useful to understand the phenomenon and explain similar cases, but it is the future user of this research who decides on its applicability.

In addition to the purposive sampling, the selection of this case is also one in which convenience sampling was used (Bryman, 2004:100) due to the availability and access to people working in the NNGO in Norway. Likewise, these people may be seen as my gatekeepers.

4.3 Description of the setting

As described before, the chosen case to be studied was the relationship between a Norwegian NGO who had a NGO partner in Latin America, more concretely, Peru. This Peruvian NGO has two main offices, one, which I visited, is located in the Andes Mountains, and their work is framed mainly by a project designed for 5 years, in agreement with their Northern partner.

Education is the southern oranization's priority, and their mission is primarily to improve the educational quality of rural schools, based on the sustainable, equalitarian and human development, attending to the poorest schools of the region (CODE 2002). They sign cooperation agreements with these schools (53) and communities, having the support of the ministry of education and local authorities as local partners.

The SNGO's office is established in the biggest town in the region, but the schools that are included in the project are located in distant communities, sometimes taking 2 or 3 hours to reach there by car. Their daily work consists in the coordination of several activities with each one of these schools and groups, visiting them and arranging training workshops. There are only 6 people working in the SNGO: the project coordinator, an administrator, two project assistants, a secretary and a driver, and they all deal with the 53 schools.

An important characteristic of the organization is that every year they receive a pair of Norwegian youth, who work as volunteers with the SNGO as a part of a cultural exchange program that the Northern NGO holds with its Southern partners. As a result of this the

SNGO staff members are more accustomed to receiving Norwegian people as visitors and thus have having some familiarity with the Norwegian culture.

There are many more other details of the project activities left out of this explanation, but what is mentioned is enough to give an idea of the daily work of the SNGO staff and the activities that I was involved in during the participant observation.

4.4 The role of the researcher

As stated earlier, the researcher is considered an instrument of inquiry in the qualitative strategy. It would be naïve to believe that a researcher inserted in a setting for a limited period of time is an innocuous action. Rather the contrary, the sole presence of the researcher does have an effect on the setting, and it could even result in a kind of observer irony, where the observer is observed by the participants. This is why "phenomenological approaches to qualitative research stress the importance of 'reflexivity' i.e. an awareness of the ways in which the researcher as an individual with a particular social identity and background has an impact on the research process" (Robson, 2002:172). Reflections of this nature are the content of this section of the chapter.

To better understand the role I played in this study, it is necessary to describe the process by which I accessed the setting. The entry to the local Southern NGO was obtained through a contact person in the Northern NGO in Norway. The relationship was established in the terms that the NNGO would provide the contact information with the executive director of the SNGO, but the NNGO was going to keep my visit to the SNGO out of their responsibility area. This fact was convenient in terms of validity, because the Northern partner was neither sending nor funding me. This situation located me in a neutral and outsider position, giving me freedom in the design and the whole process, with any kind of commitment of "writing nicely" about them. Once I made the contact with the SNGO, I explained my purpose and the activities I would perform there, and my visit was enthusiastically accepted. According to the NNGO, my cultural background facilitated my access, since having Spanish as my mother tongue and being familiar to the Latin American reality would prevent the SNGO staff from dealing with language problems and my background would help my adaptation to the culture.

The fieldwork took place during September 2005. One week was spent in Lima, interviewing the staff of the Regional Office of the NNGO, contacting one local organization that is also a partner of the NNGO, and gathering documentary data at the Peruvian Agency of International Cooperation (APCI) and other institutions related to NGOs and

Development. During the 3½ weeks I spent at the SNGO setting in the Andes Mountains, I received all the facilities I needed, and as they are used to receive foreigners as visitors, they provided me with housing as they do with others. The agreement was that my role would be to conduct interviews, but the rest of the time I would be participating in their daily activities, just as the volunteers they receive every year from Norway. This agreement solved the ethical dilemma of whether to take on a covert or overt role, because my presence as a researcher was disclosed. In addition to covert/overt and participant/observer dichotomies, my situation as a researcher was located in a medium point between what can be considered an 'expatriate' researcher and another 'going home' (Lesley and Storey, 2003). Discussions around this concentrate in what is called the 'cultural shock' experienced by researchers when being immersed in a context different from their own. To this respect, my experience was double-sided, because even though I am not a Peruvian, the Latin American culture is part of me and, at least at the first sight, I had the impression of "being at home". At this point, since I was approaching a relatively well-known environment, I felt I had to be cautious and more critical, due to the risk of feeling that everything was 'normal' and I could even be 'going native'.

On the other hand, I was certainly an expatriate, not only because of being a Mexican in Peru, but above all, because of coming to do research from a Western university in Oslo. Even though the context -the people, the architecture, the markets, and the language- was not alien to me at all, the contradiction resides in that I perceived that people looked at me as a foreigner. This ambiguity of 'where I came from' manifested itself very clearly: since I live in Norway, I found myself at some moments functioning as a kind of mediator between the two cultures, because I live in the one the participants are curios about (Norwegian), and I belong to another that is very familiar to them (the Latin American). It was a paradox to some degree, because part of my focus was to explore what kind of opinions the participants had of the Norwegians as partners, but at the same time they were asking me about that; when this happened, I tried to provide concrete answers, avoiding judgments. In this sense, I became some sort of informant for them, who could "translate" information about Norway to a Latin American understanding. I decided to take something positive out of the situation, paying attention to the kind of questions that were asked to realize what kind of information they requested about Norway, and at the same time exploring what their conceptions about Norwegians were.

Authors such as Silverman (2000) Devereux & Hoddinott (1993) and Scheyvens (2003) talk about the desirable traits that a researcher should have while in the field, and

discuss the fact that aspects such as gender, nationality, social class, ethnicity and age could affect the interaction with the people from the setting. Just before arriving in the setting I asked myself how my 'demographics' (Leslie & Storey 2003: 128) could affect my interpersonal relations and the data collection. Once in the field, and in reciprocity to the openness that I was received with, I decided to be just myself, nothing more, nothing less: a young, female Mexican student in Norway conducting research in the Andes.

I realized that my age and nationality played an important role. According to the scarce and not very clear information about me the SNGO staff received from their boss -the executive director that acted as my gatekeeper- they were expecting "a lady from Norway"[12]; that made them wait for an "old woman" at the airport, as they said, perhaps a Norwegian lady with Mexican ancestors. They were positively surprised when I arrived, and in some way relieved because they said that my age and young appearance made the contact easier. Likewise, the communication would have been more difficult, both in terms of language and formality. They said that by experience they are aware of the amount of information lost through a translation.

Surprisingly, my civil status, played a role as well. They could not believe that I was married, but despite my young appearance, the fact of being married favoured issues of respect and credibility. The SNGO staff had difficulty in introducing me to project participants as "señora" (Mrs.) –even though I did not ask them to, they would do it anyway for formality- so they ended up calling me "señora-señorita" (Mrs.-Miss).

When it came to nationality, I realized after some days that the fact of being Mexican could open to me sources of information. My impression was that people were sincerely sympathetic with my country and I believe that this fact enhanced their disposition to talk to me. Furthermore, being a native Spanish speaker opened other sources of information that perhaps a non-native Spanish speaker would not have had, especially in the informal interaction with the SNGO staff where cultural codes were present. This advantage worked well in some contexts, but in others I realized that speaking the same language does not necessarily mean communicating. This happened in conversations with groups at the grassroots level, especially when I needed my questions to be "interpreted" in order for people to understand clearly what I meant. In situations like this, my 'outsider' status became more evident, and I understood that the differences researcher/informant were

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[12] In Spanish "una sñora de Noruega": the word *señora* denotes the civil status as a married woman as myself, but also makes one think of a woman of advanced age. In addition, the SNGO staff was not informed about my nationality.

¹³ see appendix B

sometimes not much about language and cultural context, but they resided in the "lifestyle" difference between rural and urban; I did not feel more of a stranger in the rural Andes than I would feel in a rural community in Mexico.

Although issues such as the possible power imbalance between researchers and research participants are not always mentioned, I think it is important to discuss them. Scheyvens & Storey (2003) mention two levels in which these asymmetries could exist: "real differences associated with access to money, education and other resources, and perceived differences that exist in the minds of those participants who feel that they are inferior, and researchers who give the impression that they are superior" (p.149). My relationship with the SNGO staff was founded on mutual respect and a sense of equality, since I was immediately included as another member of the team; yet, I feared I could be perceived as privileged due to my "urban" background. At the beginning of the research I was very cautious and attentive to details that could enhance differences, such as using a laptop 'publicly' while in the office. However, after some days I felt that none of the staff members had any of the complexes mentioned by Scheyvens and Storey (2003); quite the contrary, they were accustomed to interacting with foreigners who visit them and treat with them in terms of complete "horizontality", as they said.

4.5 Sampling

I have already explained the process for selecting a case. In this section, I will depict the way I made contact with informants in the field.

The participants

Before leaving for fieldwork, I already had an idea of the kind of participants that would be included in the study. It was more or less established who I could conduct interviews with, for example, the staff of the SNGO and the members of the Regional Office of the NNGO in Lima. However, following the principle of flexibility in qualitative inquiry, the idea of conducting focus groups was dependent on the specific setting and the access I would have to people in the communities and in the schools.

The participants were divided into different types, according to the context they belonged to:

- Members of the Northern NGO (in Lima and Norway)
- Norwegian volunteers
- Members of the Southern NGO staff
- Other partners of the SNGO

- · "Promotores" (literacy teachers)
- · Educational authorities
- · Other authorities of the community
- ▪ The grassroots:
    - · Teachers
    - · Parents
    - · Women in literacy programs
    - · Children (in an indirect way)

The access to each kind of informant was a result of snowball sampling. This, according to Bryman (2004), takes place when "the researcher samples on the basis of wanting to interview people who are relevant to the research questions" (p.34). Thus, the snowball sample consists of "asking a number of people who else to talk with,[and] the snow ball gets bigger as you accumulate new information-rich cases" (Patton, 1990: 176).

This was the method employed to access most of the participants. With regards to the NNGO, it was the director of the Regional Office who introduced me to her co-workers. To get access to the Norwegian volunteers, I contacted them through people within both the NNGO and the SNGO. When I was in the SNGO, I had access to all the staff. When it came to the partners of the SNGO, it was the leaders of the organization who introduced me to them, and when it was about the grassroots, I was brought to the communities by the SNGO staff and they gave me all the liberty to talk to whom ever I wanted. In this last respect the leader of the SNGO was very clear about letting me choose whom I wished to talk to among parents and teachers, so that he did not arrange any specific people who might have said only positive things. Before conducting any interview or focus group with those at the grassroots level, I asked for their consent and they were happy to collaborate.

An important aspect on the accessibility to key informants arose during fieldwork. I was unable to interview the executive director of IntegrAndes, who in the beginning served as my gatekeeper. This fact -due to logistical reasons- prevented me to access important data, because this informant, as in his role as the SNGOs' director, maintains important contact with the NNGO in Lima for decision-making. However, I relied in the fact that the other staff members maintain a fluid communication with the Regional Office, concerning both decision-making and operative issues. Conversely, another key informant emerged. This is the former Regional Director in Lima, who nowadays runs his own NGO, which maintains a partnership with the Foundation. His interview gave me a historical perspective of the Foundation in Peru, as well as how the partnership with IntegrAndes started. On the other

hand, I got the perspective of another partner of the Foundation and how the relationship is perceived from another Southern partner.

4.6 Methods

One of the qualities of this study is the variety of methods utilized in to gathering data, being consistent with one of the features of qualitative inquiry called the "multi-method approach" (Bryman, 2004:268). As Patton (1990) states:

> Fieldwork is not a single method or technique… Multiple sources of information are sought and used because no single source of information can be trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective… By using a combination of observations, interviewing and document analysis the fieldworker is able to use different data sources to validate and crosscheck findings. (p.244)

Following the principle of design coherence referred to previously, the methods employed in this study are in correspondence to the qualitative strategy and the interpretive nature of the research question. This is the reason for initially including participant observation and semi-structured interviewing as a means of grasping the informants' perspective. Given that the design was not rigidly stated from the beginning, the possibility of including people from the grassroots emerged. Even though this study is focused on the relationship between two NGOs, the participation of people at grassroots level was considered important to explore what kind of role they play in this partnership, since they are the ultimate beneficiaries of the SNGO-NNGO relationship; their voice was also important referring to the perception of this partnership relationship. In the same sense, the inclusion of documents to be analyzed appeared in the field. Table 4.1 shows the kind of data gathering technique used with each informant:

Table 4.1 Data collection techniques

Participant	Semi structured Interview	Focus group interviews	Informal conversation	Participatory Observation	Document analysis
NNGO members (in Lima and Norway)	☑				☑
Norwegian volunteers			☑		
SNGO members	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
"Promotores" (literacy teachers)		☑	☑		
Educational authorities	☑				
Other authorities of the community			☑		
Teachers		☑	☑	☑	
Parents			☑		
Women in literacy programs			☑	☑	
Children				☑	☑

This table gives an indication of the amount of information collected, due to the variety of methods and participants. In the next sections I will

1) describe each one of the methods chosen;

2) explain how they fit within the methodological approach;

3) provide details about how the instruments where prepared and data were collected;

4) explain to whom the methods were applied;

5) describe the kind of information obtained and

6) give some reflections about the use of the methods.

4.6.1 Participatory observation

Participant observation refers to the "observation carried out when the researcher is playing an established participant role in the scene studied" (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994:248). Since the preparation stage, my role in the fieldwork was defined somewhere between the status of 'participant-as-observer' and 'observer-as-participant' (Bryman, 2004:301), meaning that I would have an active involvement in the daily activities of the southern NGO –as much as possible-, as well as taking field notes, but the main role would be as an interviewer and an observer. As the fieldwork evolved, sometimes I even became "a fully functioning member of the social setting" (Bryman, 2004:301), but most of the time my research tasks were the priority.

I considered participant observation to be a helpful technique in order to give an account of the everyday life in the setting, experiencing and feeling what it is like to be a part of the organization, and in a limited way, being part of this partnership. Participant observation would permit me to develop an insider's view of what goes on. The short period of time (3 ½ weeks) I spent in the organization prevented me from getting a total picture of what the whole SNGO project is about, as well as to get a sense of complete "normality". Still, the timing for being there was adequate in the sense that the month of September is prior to the arrival of the Norwegian volunteers, which would eventually allow me to observe interactions between the two partners concerning the organization of the visits.

In spite of the short time and the noted limitations, I chose participatory observation as an effective means to complement the interviews. The combination of the two methods worked in different ways: first, I observed situations that gave me hints about what to ask during the interviews; second, I was able to confirm or disconfirm data I got in the interviews by observing natural occurring situations; third, I obtained information that people in a an interview situation would not say; and fourth, I got important data by interacting informally

with people that were not necessarily interviewed (see section 4.6.3 for more details concerning the interview technique).

My insertion in the setting was a relatively quick process; it did not take a long time before I was accepted as a part of the team in the SNGO. Although my presence there was openly for research motives, I made it clear that I would be more than happy to collaborate with them in their daily job if needed. The first few days as a participant while in the office were in some way confusing, everybody had a defined role and work to do in the project, except me, so I decided to use this time to read and write notes. As time passed, I developed a "natural" role cooperating with the daily activities: I found myself helping with paperwork and preparation of the visits to the communities and helping with the material for the workshops. In the beginning my role was closer to the observer side of the participant-observer continuum. As Morse (1994) suggests, "during the first period of data collection in an ethnographic study the researcher's observations must remain unfocused. Because feelings of confusion associated with 'being new' are extreme, data collection is necessarily unfocused" (p. 228).

I also became involved in activities during the visits to the communities, such as helping a dentist brought by the SNGO to the schools to keep record of the extracted teeth, organizing recreational activities with both children and parents or lending and installing my computer for a film show. Parallel to these activities I took time to talk to parents and teachers in informal conversations. On other occasions, when the activities of the SNGO in the community where not that intense, my visits where more directed to conduct a focus group or participate as a member of the literacy groups while the SNGO staff attended other affairs. I also had to rely on informal and non-planned circumstances, such as taking advantage of the time spent in the car to talk to SNGO staff through which I found out information about the Peruvian context.

Devereux, and Hoddinott (1993) talk about the importance of getting involved in the social life of the setting, in order to get a holistic view of the phenomenon. To this respect, my participation included contexts such as the family life of some of the staff members, and attending social and cultural events in the community. This kind of interaction turned out to be very valuable in combination with what Patton (1990: 281) calls the 'informal conversational interview'. In this manner, I had the chance to know people in informal circumstances and ask questions spontaneously. This kind of informal interview was useful to gather data among the SNGO staff, members of the community, parents, teachers and other local partners. Thus, this method allowed me to learn about how they perceive the work of

the NNGO involved in this case, compared to the performance of other NNGOs, as well as the involvement of parents in the development project.

4.6.2 The note taking

One of the most important features of participant observations is note writing. In this process, the researcher is committed to give an account of what she/he is observing, trying to be as little judgmental as possible, giving descriptions and reporting facts. Authors such as Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (1995) point out the importance of making note writing a continuous process, in order to see the evolution of the impressions the researcher gets from the beginning to the end of fieldwork, instead of leaving this activity at the conclusion of the data gathering.

As it was described, the involvement in the daily activities could sometimes be very intense. These visits to the communities, leaving at 7am and returning late at night, did not leave much energy or time to write very detailed notes during the visits. However, writing field notes took place almost every night, keeping track of activities, people who I talked to, and reflections about the data gathering of the day, and these notes would illuminate further questions to be asked. It was in some way difficult to establish the limit between 'objective' data and information produced in a more insightful form. To help differentiate these two sources, I had one notebook for writing notes from interviews, activities, facts, descriptions and observations; the other notebook was a kind of personal diary, where I wrote about the progress of the research, feelings, interpretations and deeper thoughts.

The note writing happened under different circumstances, depending on the participant I had interacted with. I would write key words immediately after a meeting with illiterate women or comments during and after a formal interview about how the interview went. I would also write notes in English or even Norwegian if there was some information better to keep confidential. It was also very useful to write e-mails to my advisor as a way to keep chronological track of my impressions, decisions and comments.

4.6.3 Interviewing

> "The purpose of interviewing is to find out what is on someone else's mind" (Patton, 1990:278)

Together with participant observations, qualitative interviews were the other main method of data collection. This technique was considered the most appropriate because its purpose "is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the

meaning of the described phenomena" (Kvale, 1996:5), permitting the informant to express her- or himself, portray their perspective, and at the same time focusing on specific issues.

The interviews were semi-structured, in which, as Bryman (2004) explains, the interviewer has a series of questions in a typical interview guide, but the sequence of the questions is flexible and can vary. In this type of interview, the researcher can ask for further information in order to go more in depth about what the respondent said. The kind of participants that would be interviewed was somewhat defined before arriving in the field. However, once in the setting the preferred sampling of informants was purposeful "on the basis of wanting to interview people who are relevant to the research questions" (Bryman, 2004: 334).

This prior knowledge permitted the formulation of interview guides that I called "fieldwork cards" (see appendix B), which outlined the general topics that would be approached with each kind of participant. These cards also included a variety of possible specific questions, whose formulation was directed according to the research questions.

The cards, as interview guides, were flexible and able to be modified once in the field, depending on the specific contexts and information received in the process. In general, they had a common structure:

- Basic concepts: Definition of the relationship, characteristics of a partnership in the respondent's terms
- Functions corresponding to each partner in the relationship
- Perceptions about their partner
- Perceptions about themselves as part of the relationships
- Outcomes/benefits of the relationship to each partner
- Issues of balance, dependence, ownership, sustainability

This design matches Patton's *general interview guide approach* (1990), where "the interview guide serves as a checklist during the interview to make sure that all topics are covered" (p.280).

With this frame of reference, the format of my semi-structured interviews was more or less consistent. First of all, I introduced myself and if it was the very first time the interviewee and I met, I delivered a letter from the University of Oslo that asked for the informant's cooperation. Then I proceeded to explain in general terms the topic of my research, without giving details about previous notions I had obtained through the literature in order to not influence their answers, rather I just said I was interested in the partnership relationship between the two organizations, in particular the perspective from the South, and

therefore their participation was especially important. On other occasions, this introduction was not necessary, because the informant was already aware of the focus of my research and the reason for the interview.

After this short introduction, I proceeded to show a letter of consent (see appendix C) in order to get permission to audio record the interview. I told them that the audio recording was mainly for issues of accuracy, so that I could hear again exactly what they said and I would be the only one listening to them. All the interviewees, notwithstanding the fact that trust and rapport was already established between us, signed the consent form and agreed to have the interview recorded. To this respect, the reactions were varied: some of the interviewees (the minority) took it seriously and were very interested in receiving a copy of the letter, while others (the majority) didn't really think that the letter was necessary since they trusted me.

During the actual interview situation, I did what Robert Weiss (1994:77) calls "catching markers", that is, when an informant "throws" a word or a phrase that, if caught by the researcher, can be explored in more detail or lead to other interesting topics. During my interview conversations it was usual that respondents touched a topic that was already included in my guide. I used this reference as a marker and asked about the topic, integrating my follow up questions to the conversation in a natural way. I clarified what I understood from the preceding question before going to the next one, and in other instances I would summarize what had been said in order to get the participant's verification.

It is also important to mention that in some instances, I had the opportunity to conduct more than one interview with some of the key informants. In the SNGO setting, I conducted a first interview at the beginning in order to get a general picture of the situation and initial information, and at the end to wrap up some issues I observed, as well as asking some final questions I needed in order to clarify some concepts. In Lima, I had the opportunity to do the same: I conducted interviews before going to the SNGO setting, and some others afterwards, which permitted illumination, contrast and confirmation with the information from the Northern partner.

4.6.7 Focus groups and group interviews

The focus group is a "group interview on a specific topic; which is where the 'focus' comes from. It is an open-ended group discussion guided by the researcher" (Robson, 2002: 284). This method was thought of in the design as a complement to participatory observations and the semi-structured interviews. I considered this method valuable and useful because through

the interaction between respondents, I would obtain the perspective of the members of the organization as a group and as a working team, with regards to their feelings towards the relationship with their partners. Supporting this idea, Judith Green and Laura Hart (1999) say that "discussion groups bring together peers, ideally participants who have relationships which pre-existed the research setting" (p.21). Another advantage of this kind of interview is that despite the short time, it makes possible to gather information from several participants at the same time. This allowed me the opportunity to include voices from groups that collaborate as local partners of the SNGO, namely schoolteachers, "promotores" (literacy teachers) and participants in literacy groups. The interviews lasted a minimum 30 minutes with women who were participants in the literacy groups and a maximum of 1 ½ hour with teachers and SNGO staff.

These group interviews were more of the unstructured type (Bryman, 2004). Here I had mainly a list of topics to cover that were included in an interview guide or aid mémoire. I was usually provided with the facilities to conduct the interview, such as a quiet room in the SNGO office or the principal's office in the schools. I was also allowed to tape the group sessions. Although there is much written about the convenient size and conformation of the groups being interviewed, in this case I could do nothing about it as I chose to interview previously integrated groups in their natural conformation. In this way, the sampling of the groups was also purposive.

Some traits characterized the interaction as a result of the pre-existence of the groups. When interviewing school staff, for example, gender and authority manifested itself very clearly. For example, when all the teachers where females and the principal a male, the latter tended to dominate the conversation, although the number of women in the group outnumbered the men. Conversely, when the staff was balanced and there were as many women as men –including the principal- the participation was more balanced. When interviewing the entire SNGO staff the leader also tended to dominate the conversation, although the other participants contributed to the discussion and the same leader encouraged them to do so. Interviewing the group of "promotors" or literacy teachers was a very constructive encouraging experience. The discussion with these young teachers was fluid and interactive, providing a good amount of useful data. As participants knew each other the conversation was very lively.

On the contrary, the kind of interview conducted with groups at the grassroots level could hardly be called focus groups, since the participation was not that active and the conditions in which they were conducted did not allow for a focused discussion. Thus I

prefer to include these discussions under the interview category that Patton (1990) denominates an "informal conversational interview" (p.288). Furthermore in these cases I preferred not to take notes, fearing that this might intimidate the participants and the presence of an audio recorder was out of questions; it would have been too intrusive. Instead, I sat on the ground with the group of mothers participating in an early childhood care project or joined a literacy circle and chatted with them. This kind of interaction was not easy at the beginning, due to the shyness of the people and the short time I would spend with them, but toward the end of the sessions people opened up and spoke with more confidence. The SNGO staff introduced me and told them the reason of my visit. On some occasions, the staff member would also take part in the discussion. I thought first this would result in the inhibition of the participants, but surprisingly, it contributed in the sense that SNGO members would function as a bridge, interpreting my questions when participants did not understand clearly what I meant due to differences in vocabulary and other factors. Furthermore, some of these interviews gave me clues about how to redirect or formulate questions to the NGO staff, as in the case of accountability.

4.6.8 Document information

This type of information was not formally considered in the original design, but as things developed in the fieldwork, several kinds of documentation ended up being relevant to the research question. These documents consist primarily of:

- The Institutional Magazine that the SNGO publishes each trimester. The selected articles contain mainly chronicles of the visits of Norwegian members of the NNGO to the region, as well as a visit of the Norwegian Ambassador for Peru.
- Videos that show the work of the SNGO and one that shows the visit of the Norwegian ambassador in Peru, Chile and Ecuador to the workplace of the SNGO (this visit is narrated in one of the issues of the institutional magazine).
- Extracts of a compilation of songs and poesies written by the children in the communities. Those talking about the SNGO, the NNGO or Norway were selected. Children were not directly interviewed due to the ethical issue that represents the lack of permission from their parents.
- Official documentation that reflects the agreements of cooperation between the SNGO and its partners (local authorities, schools and the NGO)
- The official mission statement document of the NNGO
- Photographs

4.7 Trustworthiness

How do we know that the conclusions of a piece of research are "true"? Which parameters are appropriate to decide it? Durrheim and Wassenaar (2002) say that validity "is the degree in which the research conclusions are sound" (p. 61). However, is the soundness of any kind of research assessed in the same way?

Lincoln and Guba (1985) claim that naturalistic inquiry should adopt alternative criteria to the positivistic or mainstream inquiry in order to establish the quality of the study; the term employed to parallel validity is "trustworthiness". A study is 'trustworthy' when it "[…] demonstrates its true value, provides the basis for applying it, and allows for external judgments to be made about the consistency of its procedures and the neutrality of is findings or decisions" (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993: 29).

Based on the writings of Lincoln and Guba, many methodologists such as Bryman (2004), Durrheim and Terre Blanche (2002) and Erlandson et al. (1993) refer to the criteria that compose trustworthiness, the terms given to these elements in naturalistic inquiry, and some techniques to achieve each criterion.

4.7.1 Credibility

Credibility is the means to provide truth-value and the parallel to internal validity in conventional research. Credibility is about producing convincing and believable findings not only to the research community, but above all, to the members of the reality that was studied, in order to confirm that "the investigator has correctly understood that social world" (Bryman, 2004:275). There are several ways to establish credibility in research, but I used two of them in this study in order to confirm information: triangulation and respondent validity or member check

Triangulation

According to Robson (2002) "triangulation involves the use of multiple sources to enhance the rigor of research" (p.174), preventing the researcher from personal biases likely to be present when using a single method (Denzin, 1989).

Denzin (1989: 236) outlines four basic types of triangulation: (1) *methodological triangulation*: the use of multiple methods to study a single problem or program; (2) *investigator triangulation*: multiple rather than single observers of the same phenomenon; (3) *theory triangulation*: multiple perspectives in relation to the same set of objects; (4) *data triangulation:* the variety of data sources.

Taking this typology as a frame of reference, this study used two kinds of triangulation (1 and 4). First, the use of different methods of inquiry permitted the collection of varied types of information such as field notes from the observation, transcripts of semi-structured interviews, discussions in the focus groups and document information (refer section 4.6). The other kind of triangulation refers to the variety of people interviewed. In this case, since the unit of study is a partnership relationship, it was important to address several actors in the relationship, such as the NNGO, the SNGO, the different partners and the final beneficiaries of the project, each one providing their perspective of the phenomenon in order to get a more complete picture.

Respondent validation

To give back to the participants an account of the information collected is a way to increase the validity of the study, that is, respondent validity. Bryman (2004) says that "the aim of the exercise is to seek corroboration or otherwise of the account that the researcher has arrived at" (p.274). This can be done in several ways. The respondent validation that this study employed took three different forms. In the first place, as suggested by Scheyvens and Storey (2003), I decided to make a presentation of my preliminary results and observations at the end of the fieldwork phase to the staff of the SNGO. This was presented in a PowerPoint presentation entitled "My learning with IntegrAndes" and it contained my understanding of their perception of the partnership relationship. This presentation was made to allow the staff members to tell me if they detected any misinterpretation from my part and also to give any further comments they thought were important. The intention of this exercise was also to leave something before I left the field to the people I had been living and working with during three and a half weeks. Fortunately, I received positive feedback and the staff said that what I presented was accurate and clear; they also told me that I should just contact them if I needed anything else. Moreover, the southern partner sent this document to the Regional Office of the NNGO. In the same sense, I was asked to write a two-page article for their institutional magazine. In this article I wrote a summary of my experiences in the field and some reflections and comments about my visit.

I also practiced another kind of member check during the interviews. There was one specific interview that I considered very important. Since the interviewee is a very busy person and I felt that there was no point in sending her an interview transcript to read and correct, we agreed that at the end of the interview I would make a summary about what had been said and the understanding I received. I used the notes I made during the interview, and

as I spoke she agreed, clarified or added information. During the rest of the interviews I tried to clarify immediately the sense of the participant's answer. I told them what I had understood and asked them clarification or confirmation.

The third exercise of respondent validation was done when I had the opportunity of meeting the interviewee at least twice. This was very helpful because I could conduct interviews with important informants, both from the SNGO and the NNGO at the beginning and at the end of the fieldwork. The first interview was to immerse myself into the context, the project and some general dimensions. The second interview at the end of the fieldwork was conducted when I had a better idea of the context and the topic of inquiry. It was in these second interviews that I could clarify issues that were not very apparent in the beginning or that I considered important to follow up in more detail.

I also committed myself to send them the executive report of my research. It was agreed in this way with the organization, primarily because of the limited time they would have to read the whole report, and also due to the language matter.

4.7.2 Transferability

In qualitative inquiry, the way to ensure the applicability of a study is through transferability; this parallels the mainstream concept of external validity. While in the positivist paradigm the results of a study are expected to hold in other samples of the same population, that is, generalization, naturalistic researchers and myself defend the idea that true generalizations are not possible, because the findings are heavily context defined (Erlandson et al., 1993; Bryman, 2004). Lincoln and Guba (1985) state it in this way: "… if there is to be transferability, the burden of proof lies less with the original investigator than with the person seeking to make an application elsewhere" (p.198).

However, by providing a rich description of the context where the study took place, the qualitative researcher sets a basis for future users of the findings to decide whether the results can be transferred to new contexts to provide a framework. The contextualization of this study has been provided in some sections of this chapter and in the previous one. In addition to the thick description, another means to ensure the transferability of a study is the use of a purposive sample, as in this study, because in this way the range of specific information that can be obtained from and about the context is maximized (Erlandson et al., 1993).

4.7.3 Dependability

Dependability is the qualitative term used to define the consistency of a study. Reliability, its parallel in quantitative research, means that when a study is repeated in the same conditions and with the same subjects, the results will be the same. This is based on the assumption that reality is predictable. Conversely, naturalistic researchers do not expect the same results to be repeated, because a naturalistic study cannot be fully replicated. It is believed that behaviour and opinions differ depending on the context, and it is believed that reality changes; however, these changes should be 'trackable' (Erlandson et al., 1993). For achieving dependability, Bryman (2004) recommends to keep complete records of all phases of the project such as documents, critical incidents, and a running account of the process of the inquiry. Based on that, an external person should be able to determine how far proper procedures are being and have been followed.

In the present study my advisor has functioned as an auditor, not only in the design of the project, but also during the data collection process through e-mail communication that permitted me to share with her my progression and process of decisions. In addition, my research journal provides a trail of how the research has developed.

4.7.4 Confirmability

Earlier in this chapter I described the influence that the characteristics of the researcher have upon the study. This means that it is necessary to admit that no complete objectivity is possible in a qualitative study, and it cannot be totally free of bias. However, to ensure neutrality as a component of the trustworthiness of a piece of research, it is essential to trust in the confirmability of the data. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), when 'objective' means reliable, factual, confirmable or confirmed, "this definition removes the emphasis from the investigator (it is no longer his or her objectivity that is at stake) and places it where, as it seems to the naturalist, it ought more logical to be: on the data themselves" (p.300).

It is intended that this study leave evidence of the whole process, from the posing of the research questions, the literature that triggered them, the data collection and their analysis, to the findings and conclusions. This thesis serves to provide this evidence.

4.8 My contribution

When conducting social science research, there are some ethical issues that should be considered, especially because we are entering, in some way, into people's life. One of the risks is "academic tourism" referred to by Scheyvens and Storey (2003: 2), where the benefit of the inquiry is exclusive to the researcher and not to the participants and the research

having an exploitative character. While being in the field, I wondered in which way my presence there could benefit the people who were collaborating with me in my project. I actually posed these questions to the SNGO staff in the last session when I presented my preliminary findings and they expressed big expectations in the sense of reassuring their partner about the work that is being done in the SNGO. Thus, it was demonstrated the value they attach to the research I conducted about them which shows what they do. Therefore, my role was appreciated, because through the research I am able to describe the work that the SNGO is doing. However, the existence of this contribution would only become clear after the conclusion of the research, but the concrete gains of my presence in the field allowed me to identify some issues.

The very act of being in the setting, arranging meetings for the focus groups and wondering about questions like the motivations of each partner to participate opened a space for dialogue. The fact that members of the NGO staff were present in some of these meetings with their local partners helped in the sense that people from the grassroots levels could clarify questions they had, such as those I had formulated and others they had from before. This arena permitted an informal type of communication between the two actors, opening spaces for discussion and clarification of important information between the to parties, which otherwise do not occur very often, due to the limited time and formality of the encounters.

4.9 Conclusion

In this chapter I have given an account of the process followed in order to gather data during the fieldwork in Peru in September 2005. Here I described the setting and the conditions in which I entered the field. I stressed the importance of the coherence between the research approach and the nature of the research question, which lead me to the use of qualitative methods such as the unstructured interviews and the participant observation. Throughout the chapter, I reflected upon my role as a researcher, and the implications that my presence have towards the setting, the participants and the data. I also discussed the manners in which I established the trustworthiness of the study, by providing a thick description of the fieldwork activities, triangulating the methods and sources of data, getting feedback from the participants and keeping track of the process.

The following chapter is also concerned with this last issue. As the first chapter implying analysis, I describe the process of "preparation of data" in order to process them in a categorization phase. The chapter constitutes the presentation of data, making use of actual quotes and having organized the data in a more refined way.

5. Findings: Partnership as understood in the field

5.1 The analysis process

The previous chapter described the process followed in order to gather data. This chapter will explain the way in which this raw material was ordered, processed and treated with the purpose of formulating categories that could be useful for the analysis and understanding the phenomenon of partnership in this case study. This is done with the purpose of keeping track of the process where the conclusions come from. It is important to stress that data analysis started together with the data gathering in the form of notes taking, listening to the interviews or recovering other first impressions and insights that helped to comprehend the case studied. This is already an analytical exercise that Pidgeon and Henwood (2004) call writing theoretical memos. After the description of the preparation process, organized data will be displayed in order to portray the situation found, including the extensive use of quotes that constitute actual comments made by participants, accompanied by a first attempt to link these data with the literature presented in chapter 2.

5.1.1 Preparation of data (coding)

In the first stage, all interviews were transcribed. This was done both in Spanish and in English. Due to the large amount of data, an alternative to full transcription was used in the interviews that were considered as less relevant, being "selective, picking out relevant passages, and noting the tape counter numbers where there are particular quotations, examples, etc." (Robson, 2002:290).

Following the principles of Grounded Theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), the categorization started in an inductive way (open coding), exploring in detail few interviews and obtaining refined codes and categories from there. Then, in the need for some "predefined" categories (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996) I referred to the topics covered in the original interview guides. These themes were pulled out of each interview and in this way some deductive categories were defined. These last categories were important, but due to their deductive nature were in some degree rigid and too attached to the initial intentions, impeding interesting and indigenous concepts to emerge. In addition, these deductive categories were opposing actors to each other. At this point it was important to combine both inductive and deductive categories; it was using this complete set of codes that all interviews

where coded, allowing the emergence, splitting and disappearance of categories. Once all the interviews where categorized, I extracted the repeated codes within each interview and listed them. In a further step, similar labels across interviews where grouped and the definite categories where conformed. In order to go beyond the coding process and toward interpretation, interview extracts of each category were retrieved and the internal consistency of each category was revised. It is important to note that the principles of grounded theory were used as elements that helped to manage data and understand the phenomenon, rather than in strictly constructing theory.

5.1.2 Putting the pieces together

Categorizing implies a process where the information is fragmented; taking out of context all those pieces of information that portray opinions, thoughts and feelings of the participants, even risking the loss of their initial meaning. The important part of this process is to organize the fragments in a way that will help us to understand the case.

The task of gathering together these categories that contained fragments of information was undertaken, once again, following an inductive-deductive process. Simultaneously to the coding, I made an intuitive effort to find the broad topics, characteristics or patterns of the partnership relationship being studied. These broad categories are what Strauss and Corbin (1990) call *phenomena*, and are composed by concepts and subcategories. These phenomena were considered as big themes around which the other categories would be wrapped; in this way, each category was included into different phenomena, allowing a category to be present in more than one phenomenon. In a second step, the same categories were grouped inductively with others that were similar, this time having the category placed in only one group. These last groups resulted similar to the original phenomena, helping to integrate new elements in the original clusters. The result of this was a new map of integral clusters that are related to the phenomenon of partnership studied here. Figure 5.1 is called "The Partnership Tree", whose broad branches are the phenomena and the minor branches emerging from them are the categories. In this figure, the relationships between phenomena –or big branches- are not represented because this is the matter for the next chapter; however, it is noteworthy that some categories –thinner branches- are repeated throughout the tree (marked with an * in Figure 5.1) if they were 'behaving' in different manners, because the boundaries between them were made artificially during the categorization. Moreover, the phenomena at the centre (frameworks and accompaniment) contain categories transversally present in most of the other phenomena.

Figure 5.1 "The Partnership Tree"-Codes and concepts organized in phenomena
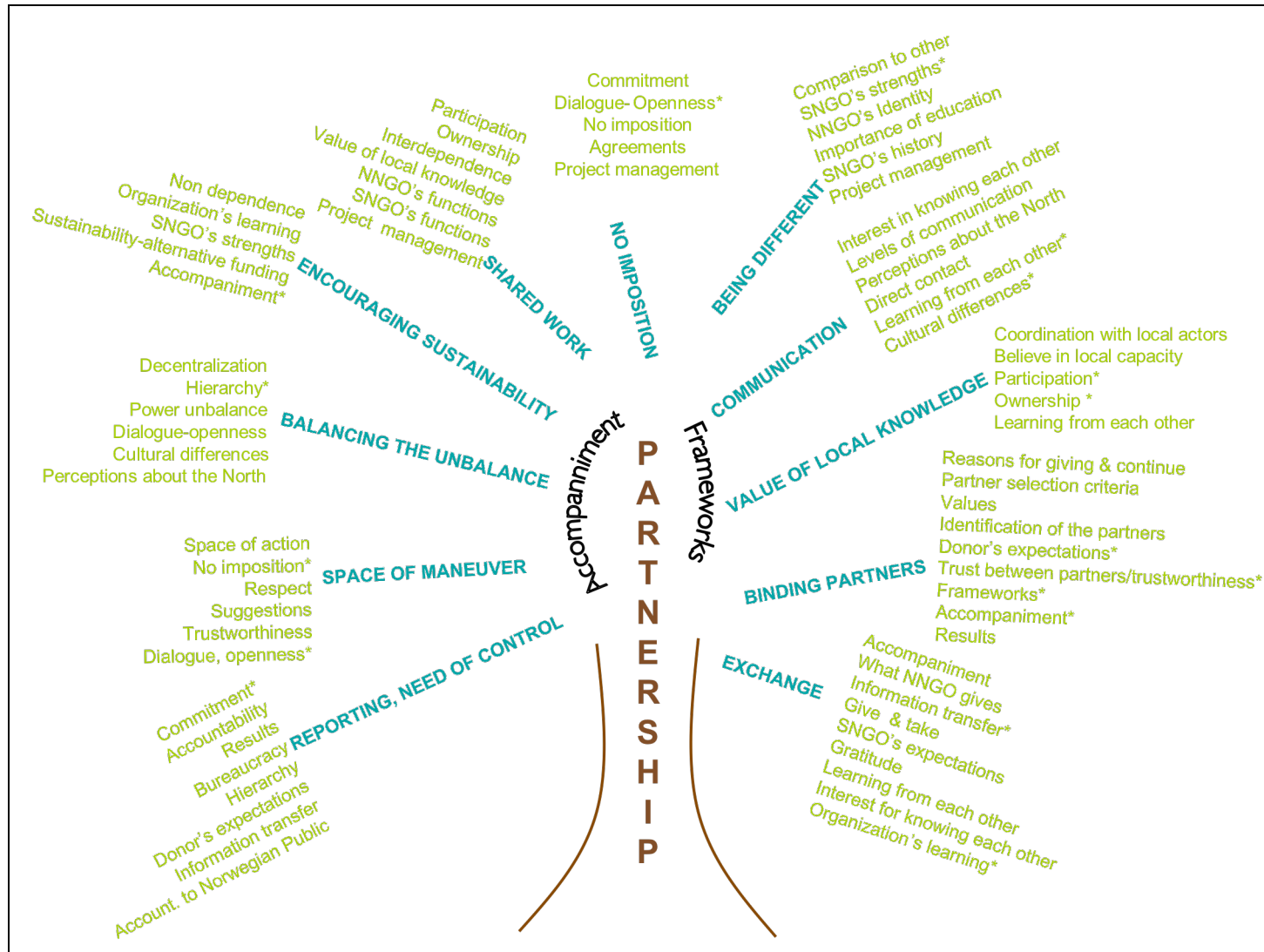
5.2 Data display

As Figure 5.1 shows, there are many phenomena surrounding the subject of partnership. In this section each phenomenon will be described, supported by the integration of the main categories included in each branch and examples extracted from the actual data. This is the presentation of the data found in the fieldwork that makes an attempt to portray the points of view of the participants in the field, accomplishing the thick description necessary to the trustworthiness of qualitative research (Erlandson et al. 1993). Many informants are quoted, and appendix D constitutes a guide to find the informant referred to; when no specific position in the organization is indicated, the voices are generally representing the Southern or the Northern partner.

5.2.1 Partnership

It is important to start presenting the meanings that the different organization members give to the concept of partnership, depending on the place where they are located in this process. It is relevant to note that there is no a direct translation of the word "partnership" as such in Spanish, but a parallel term is used in the jargon of the international cooperation in Latin America: "alianza" or alliance. However, it is interesting to note that in this case, the staff of the SNGO has also used the term "partnership" in English, when the previous regional director was in charge. Other words mentioned by the staff that are immediately associated to the relationship are "coordination" or the expression "collaboration between trustworthy institutions".

For both organizations –IntegrAndes and the Foundation- partnership implies that each partner has its role well defined, such as the Northern partner not being an operative institution that implements a project in the field. Rather, they look for local organizations and establish a working relationship with them, by funding their projects. This is how in this case the SNGO is considered the "counterpart" and the NNGO is named "la cooperante", "la financiera" or the "cooperating and funding institution" –that in fact means "donor"-, both of them resulting in "compañeras" or partners. When asking a member of IntegrAndes how do they understand this relationship, he said:

> "…it is all about collaborating, right? The funding institution has a mission, a goal worldwide and we have found each other in the road, so, we are now, let's say, an arm, with which we can reach the communities, the poorest people. It is in this sense that we understand the partners relationship, that we are working with the same objective" (10.9.05/SNGOsm2/int)[15].

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[15] See appendix D for the participants and interviews' abbreviation list.

In addition, the SNGO's staff interprets partnership as the working approach adopted by the Foundation, reflecting the way in which a country shows solidarity to another. The views of the NNGO are not very different; the Regional Director of the Foundation said: "we have to acquire alliances, relationships with such characteristics and commitment that ensure us that we're getting the expected results" (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int). In the view of the Southern partners, partnership means that "the funding institution is motivated to give us the resources because they see some results in the objectives and goals according to the established project" (12.9.05/SNGOsf/fg). Other Northern views about partnership in this case are:

> I think that partnership is a method of working, the way we are working, but also is a kind of a goal in itself, because it has to do with equality, it has to do with being on the same level; at least that is the objective. I think we can never manage totally to be in the same level, because it has to do with that you have the money and all of these things, but still it's a way of reminding us all that to the extent possible, we want to work in an equal level, and more than anything it's about something going in both ways. It's not that giving something but also that receiving something" (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

For both parties, partnership is seen as the result of two organizations encountering each other with matching objectives and ideals. Some of the partnership relationships of the Norwegian Foundation in Peru have lasted a long time, and the staff attributes it to the fact that the Southern partners identify themselves with the NNGO and establish also a relationship based on friendship. Goals are not the only element of identification, but the shared values were mentioned on several occasions, such as solidarity, mutual respect, trust, openness, fluid communication, clarity and "not only having the values written in a paper, but to live them in reality" (1.9.05/NNGOro2/int).

I considered it important to explore what are, in the perspective of these partners, the main components that make a partnership function. Both sides of the partnership agreed that trust and transparency are fundamental in the relationship: "according to our experience, the fundamental is the trust; on the other hand, the organization has to be transparent… this helps us to maintain good conditions in the relationship" (10.9.05/SNGOsm2/int). They are conscious that "partnerships are in vogue, but they work when there is transparency, good administration, good coordination and openness. Because even if in the discourse you do nice things but the opposite in the practice, you're wrong" (27.9.05/SNGOsm1/int). The financing institution indicates that due to the traits of corruption that have appeared when dealing with cooperation funds in countries such as in Latin Americans, their responsibility is "to assure that the funds are managed in a transparent way… there has to be transparency in the counterpart, so that the funding institution can ask for information at any moment" (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int). Another member of the NNGO staff said it very clearly:

> I think that trust and confidence in each other is essential, and communication. Actually I think that trust and confidence frame many things, because if there is trust, then there is also openness and… I think there are some of the key words; but also I think, I hope, that partnership also means that it's possible to be open about good things, showing the strong sides, but also the weak sides, that it should be possible and ownership is from both partners, is not just something imposed from one partner, and it is something that both partners want, and I think it is a good arena for learning from each other (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

Another important component of partnership, stressed by the Northern Partner, is the temporality of the relationship and the different forms that a partnership can take.

> It is important to establish since the beginning that we are going to walk together until the organization has strengthened enough and has achieved some of the challenges that we agreed on. A start and an ending (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int).

This medium term sight warranties, in some way, the achievement of results proposed in the projects. As a complement to the temporality of the relationship, a NNGO member staff mentioned the stability of the partnership, saying that "a partnership is also staying with someone for a while. Not breaking off when NORAD breaks off. If you are having an established partnership in someway, it means something even though the environment changes" (27.10.05/NNGOho/int). This is why the Foundation in particular uses its own fundraising resources for supporting the projects in Latin America. In addition to this comment, the NNGO staff member says that partnership is not exclusively defined as money, but in a further stage it could take other forms such as cultural exchange. Another interesting concept about what partnership is, include the idea of collaboration not only among them, but also with other actors such as local authorities in the Southern communities or the constituencies of the NNGO. All these mentioned factors and others will be explored in more depth in the following sections that groups them into the various phenomena.

5.2.2 Resource Exchange

As it was mentioned in the previous section, exchange is a vital part of a partnership relationship. There are many things being exchanged from one partner to the other, and not necessarily just financial resources from North to South. I considered it important to explore what are those assets shared by partners that are different from money, that could eventually extend the definition of the relationship and make it more integral and horizontal. This phenomenon has to do with the things that are actually being exchanged, but it concerns also those other things that are expected to be received -like information- and those that are the result of the interaction -such as learning. A member of the NNGO expressed how this sharing takes place:

> Apart from money, we strive for giving or sharing competence, it could be in terms of capacity building seminars, like about fundraising, about methods of evaluation, it could be about, also about

organizing, so that partners come together and can learn from each other. And I think that that is one of our most important roles. To be a facilitator in the sense that they can get together and learn from each other; not necessarily learning about the Norwegian way of working, because I guess it's not that relevant. But it could be very relevant for a partner in Peru could learn from a partner in Bolivia (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

This comment refers to what is called "acompañamiento" or accompaniment, which includes among other things, advice to the Southern partners and the arrangement of seminars about education, fundraising and other relevant topics. To this respect, there was an anecdote reported by a Southern partner, saying that during an evaluation seminar, the northern facilitator did not realize that the SNGO had more experience in this topic. They felt they could contribute with their experience in that field, but in contrast they really needed other competences in domains such as fundraising. They commented:

> …nobody is invited to present the ideas about development… I could go [to Norway] and give a lecture, for them to receive something…there have been some efforts [of the regional office] to present the Latin American approach to education, but at a philosophical and educational level [these efforts] were weak… because us [in contrast], as educators, if we start talking about development, we're in our field" (31.8.05/SNGOp1/int).

It was stressed here the value of the regional knowledge in liberation theories and participatory approaches, that are worth sharing with other regions.

It is not the purpose of this study to locate partners into opposite sides; rather, the goal is to comprehend how do they build this partnership together. However, in a phenomenon such as the exchange, it is unavoidable to have two sides interacting, sending and receiving. Therefore, some elements that the North is conferring to the South can take various forms. Some are experiences shared among southern partners, being possible through NNGO's intermediation. Knowledge is shared in the form of seminars and courses, as expressed by a SNGO staff member:

> At the beginning of the year they call you, and inserted into the educational theme, a meeting permits you to get updated about the educational streams in the world, in Latin America, in Peru. Then it is to keep in touch, sharing experiences, explain your achievements, then they suggest you things. Then, accompaniment is not just about being present, but to direct the educational aspect (27.9.05/SNGOsm1/int).

This accompaniment can take different forms, and in the context of exchange, it means advisory and activities for the institutional development. The information secretary of the NNGO's regional office talks about the common goals of the partners, and views the exchange as a dependence relationship in positive terms:

> I think that if they [the Southern partners] are interested in benefiting the community and accomplishing the project, they need the support of the financial institution, in addition to the accompaniment, that is what the NNGO offers, together with its friendship and its image. All that and there is the money as well (1.9.05/NNGOro2/int).

An interesting outcome received by the Southern partner, as commented by the literacy teachers (16.9.05/SNGOp2/fg), is that they get the opportunity to work in the educational field, because due to the high unemployment, they would be otherwise working in other field, or even be unemployed.

Learning is portrayed as one of the assets moving in both directions: "for us in the SNGO, I think that the biggest thing, the most meaningful is that we have learned. Not only that we have received their money, but that we have learned" (12.9.05/SNGOsf/fg). The administrator of the project said:

> Interviewee: [this relationship with the NNGO] has helped me a lot. The concepts about development that I had before have changed completely. Because here, the Peruvian idea is that development is to build roads or classrooms, even if there's nobody using them, right? When in reality we should look at it from different standpoints, isn't it? In that sense, the relation with Norway is very special, it has helped me, it has helped a lot of us, the NGO workers, to have another vision, another concept.
> Interviewer: what would this concept be?
> Interviewee: to have a better vision of development, with human development, where people have value and not the things, and not the opposite. Here it is sometimes the opposite, that we treat people as objects (10.9.05/SNGOsm2/int).

Northern partners also express this feeling:

> I think in Norway we are receiving, one thing is information and all these things, but one thing is doing information work in Norway, I think that is giving a lot to the Norwegian public when they share in a way; and of course, for me as a colleague to the other partners abroad, I feel I'm always learning a lot, when I go to South America, for instance, I feel I come back with more [knowledge] than I had before. It's not me teaching anybody (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

This comment brings us to what the North is receiving, because for a partnership to be balanced, both parties should be giving and receiving, not only one giving and one receiving. The Regional director acknowledges this by saying:

> As a starting point, the Foundation offers the financial resource, strengthening, institutional support, advisory about the accomplishment of the projects, but we receive precisely the results of each one of our interventions. It is an end in itself for us. It is a satisfaction to confirm the improvement of the life conditions of those who we work for, that in the first place. It is a mutual enrichment, because there is a great satisfaction in being able to contribute to this process that implies giving, but also receiving the results of our intervention (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int).

Part of these rewards is expressed in the gratitude of the grassroots people. As an example of this, there are some poems written by the children of the communities that are benefited, which I found during fieldwork. This gratitude is expressed upwards both from the grassroots to the SNGO, and from the SNGO to the NNGO. There was one phrase that was constantly heard during the fieldwork: "que nos sigan apoyando" or "may they keep supporting us".

The cultural exchange program that the NNGO maintains with their Southern partners by sending Norwegian youngsters as volunteers in the different organizations is an element perceived as beneficial for both partners: from the South, they get extra help in the project

and direct contact with people from Norway, learning about Norwegian culture, among other things. From the North, these youth receive a life experience while learning how the reality is in poor countries, and a collateral beneficiary is the Norwegian society that receives the information brought by the Norwegian youth. This cultural exchange is also experienced when the people from the head office of the Foundation visit the Southern partner. Another important part of this exchange is the transfer of information in both senses, but mainly from South to North. This has to do with all the reports about the project and the progresses achieved. However, this theme will be treated more in detail in another section under a different phenomenon.

5.2.3 Binding Partners

This phenomenon refers to the elements that make the partners start a relationship in the first place, followed by what keeps the relationship going and being in "good health". It includes the factors that make the partners identify with each other, such as the goals, the mission and the values. It is important to say that this coincidence of perspectives is perceived as being from both sides, not imposed by one or the other partner. A staff member of the SNGO said that "it is easier to work together when both institutions work in the same direction" (12.9.05/SNGOsf/fg).

Values are key elements that bring both partners together because "values are influencing many other things that we're doing" (27.10.05/NNGOho/int). As commented previously, the Norwegian Foundation has a strong Christian identity, without it meaning that their function is to spread the Gospel or representing any church. In turn, the SNGO is inserted in the Latin American culture, which is known for being populated by fervent Catholic practitioners. This matching interest could be confirmed by fieldwork observations, noting many religious images hung around the locals of the Southern NGO. In addition, one of the members of the SNGO was known for being devoted to a religion other than the catholic, but that embraced the same values as Christians. Another example is the comment of the Regional Director, who stated that, among other reasons, she was elected for the position due to her firm Christian commitment (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int). The first example shows religious tolerance and the second gives an idea of the profile of the people that work in these organizations.

Traits such as values are intimately related to the criteria that the NNGO uses for choosing their partners. Even though the NNGO recognizes that at one point in the history of

the organization they worked almost exclusively with Christian organizations, it is not more a common practice. However, a member of the NNGO said:

> When choosing really to work together, [this organization] has always been very open about its values, and being a Christian organization and about the basic values that we have… they are very general, it's kind of obvious, because, of course, we don't want all our partners to be equal to us, it's a good thing that we all are different, but like human dignity, it's a general thing… and there are basic things that we are not ceding, so [if you don't agree] you should probably find another partner (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

To contrast this statement, I asked the Southern NGO staff if there was any kind of conditionality for the NNGO to support their work. They responded:

> I think that, not as much as a conditionality, but being inside the policy of values; responsibility, respect, solidarity, equality… not only people of the grassroots have to be within this framework, but also the local institution. I believe this strengthen us mutually (10.9.05/SNGOsm2/int).

In this process of identification of new allies, some important criteria mentioned by the staff of the Foundation's Regional Office are: identification with the mission and vision of the institutions; to have the same motivation as the NNGO, that is helping the most oppressed sectors of the society, "that we can speak the same language, that's the idea" (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int). The potential partners should also have some experience or have achieved some success in previous work, "we want to work with institutions that now how to do what they intend to". In recent years, the new regional director has focused on finding organizations that make an innovative and creative work, always within the institutional frameworks of education and micro financing. And last but not least, these organizations should "reach more people, have a deeper impact and using less resources" (1.9.05/NNGOro2/int).

There is no point in neglecting that the one making the choosing is the Northern institution, as well as being the one deciding whether a partnership is to be initiated or not. However, the regional director of the NNGO stated that once in the partnership, either institution has the liberty to continue or end the work relationship. Another member of the NNGO commented:

> I think that's always a challenge, I think that one of the things that can create some kind of equality or inequality, is that we are having the power of definition, in a way, and I cannot see how that could be changed. I think that it is important never to impose anything; that is really very important. But that is more like 'take it or leave it, that is what we have and we're not getting money from NORAD to do other things' (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

This inequality could be, however, countered to some degree by taking into account an initiative proposed by a southern partner some years ago. When asking IntegrAndes and other of the Foundation's partners if they knew what a Southern organization should have in order to enter into a partnership with the Foundation, they said that the Northern partner does not inform them about it. They said that there was once a proposal from three of the actual

Southern partners to participate in the selection of new ones. The idea was that if a potential partner had a project, the NNGO could ask the opinion of another partner working in the same topic (street children, rural education, teenager mothers); "the NNGO can always use its criteria, but with a valuable opinion of an experienced partner… but the NNGO does not harvest it" (31.8.05/SNGOp1/int). I asked a member of the Regional Office about this proposal, she remembered the initiative, but said that nothing happened with it.

The reasons for the North to give support to the South and to continue doing so play a role as a binding factor. From the Southern perspective, these reasons were clearly identified, as an act of solidarity based on an acknowledged need: "I don't perceive it as a question of pressure or conditionality, at least not until now. Let's say, an act of solidarity, of understanding the poverty of the other" (27.9.05/SNGOsm1/int). They attribute this to a characteristic of the Norwegian people described as "unattachment" to material things, and the will to share their wealth.

> as long as I've seen, there is this 'unattachment'. Because they have reached a level, but, what does this level has to do with Peru? They have reached this stage with their effort, but it is very interesting this act of theirs to say 'well, not only for me, also for others, they are my brothers' and all that, right? Then, I think that in that sense we explain the unattachment, the good will, the spirit of service that our funding institution has. And that is anyway resumed in a word: love (10.9.05/SNGOsm2/int).

It is interesting that the South does not take a passive and recipient position, just admiring their Northern partners. Rather, they know that they contribute to the functioning of this cycle, providing good results, and doing a good job.

> Well, we expect from them…that they are not just good and nice (buenitos). We know that they have a lot of work to do for raising the funds and the support. And they say 'these people are in underdevelopment, we have to send them [money]; these people need, but they have also accomplished their commitments, and they're sending us the documentation that proves it'. I think that they believe in us, and I suppose that in other countries where they are also working, they [Norwegians] have also their own goals to achieve" (12.9.05/SNGOsf/fg).

This comment demystifies the Norwegian partners, from an idea of good people just helping the poor, to normal people that have work to do and goals to accomplish. The valuation of the SNGO's work is also confirmed by the NNGO when telling that in the moment the NNGO had to decide about continuing the partnership with the studied SNGO, she visited them and decided that the SNGO works in a region where the need of development work is evident. So she thought that it was worth it that an organization such as the NNGO is supporting these efforts.

Relating to the duration of the partnership, a Norwegian member of the NNGO said that the fact that the 5 year project was over

> …does not necessarily mean that we stop working with this local partner, because we know that they have been able to do a good job with these communities that they have been working in, and we think

that this is a very valuable partnership, and they're working in a good way, so it is always possible to create a new project within the same frame of the partnership (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

This means that the SNGO fulfils the expectations of the Northern partner. The reasons perceived by the SNGO to continue in this relationship are understood as follows:

Interviewee: for us, as far as we have seen, to continue with this financing institution and the projects is that, on the one hand, there should be results, right? But also that the institution should be really trustworthy, I mean, that it can demonstrate, both with documents and work, that it can demonstrate what it is doing, that is working, that it is using the resources in a proper way. I think those are the fundamental axes, but on the other hand there is the practice of values; principles that are more or less from the NNGO.
Interviewer: are those values also yours?
Interviewee: yes, yes, yes! I even think that we have some more, two or three more. But I mean, we are working with the same values, very similar the mission and vision and all that (10.9.05/SNGOsm2/int).

It is interesting to complement these affirmations with a speech pronounced by the Norwegian General Director when he visited one of the Peruvian communities in 2003:

When it is about development, we should not forget the spiritual aspect of the human being. It is good to find persons that are followers of Christ, because I am personally a follower of Christ" (CODE, 2003: 7).

It might be a trivial component of identification between these two partners, but nature and geography were also mentioned during this speech pronounced by the Norwegian General Secretary:

…as you know, Norway is a country like yours, with lots of mountains; then you can understand that when I come here and I find myself surrounded by all those mountains, I feel as though I were at home. And when I see all these faces, smiling and happy, I feel even more welcome (CODE, 2003: 7).

This kind of comments makes it apparent that the identification is not only between organizations, but also between the Northern partners and the people from the grassroots. To this respect, in one of my visits to the schools, one of the teachers said that she would like to have more information about both the Northern and the Southern organizations "because we are a team, so that I could defend the work of the NGO".

5.2.4 "The NNGO has its guidelines" (Frameworks)

The phenomenon of frameworks refers to the guidelines established by the Northern partner in order to shape its work, and consequently, that of its local partners. The "policy of values" has already been mentioned as one of the factors that links the institutions. However, the Northern institution has two other formal guidelines. As referred by the General Secretary in his visit to IntegrAndes in 2003, he said to his Southern partners that the NNGO "has gone through a process of delimitating its intervention areas, focusing in two domains: basic education and micro-financing. These are the areas within which you can ask for our support" (CODE, 2003: 7).

The Norwegian Foundation considers education as a continuous process that opens the opportunities of accessing better life conditions for individuals. They have a very clear idea that this is their role, and this is what the say when talking about potential partners that do not fit into this framework:

> Interviewee: we have defined education as our main area, so, even though it was a water project that was so important to do something about water and sanitation, we would say that 'yeah, we see that it's important, but it is not our role' so we have to share the same lines, for example.
> Interviewer: so, you put this kind of…
> Interviewee: frameworks, to work within the same frame. Not that things outside our frame is wrong, but it's not our role. So, I think that is also part of the openness that we should be clear that this is our frame, in a way, and we're having these values, we're not saying that you should have the same thing, but if we're not sharing maybe this is not a partnership, in a way. And we're working within the area of education and this is what we have to offer you, if you would like to do another thing, then a good idea is to get another partner for that, because we're not professionals in that area. So it wouldn't be a good use of our resources, we could not be good advisors; we could not be good at following up. So it is not to impose, but to be clear that this is what we can do something about (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

About these guidelines, IntegrAndes staff members comment:

> Interviewee: it is important to mention that the NNGO respects our proposals
> Interviewer: In which sense?
> Interviewee: about what we want to do with the target population. Even though it is true that the NNGO has its guidelines, according to the Millennium Goals and gender equality, and so on, if you tell them 'I want to do this' they accept it, taking into account the closeness, the trust that there is between partners (12.9.05/SNGOsf/fg).

Within these frames, the educational work of the SNGO covers basic education in schools, adult and women's literacy, training seminars for teachers, workshops for young people, for local authorities and grassroots organizations.

> With the Foundation it is all concerning education. I was telling you that at the beginning, with our first project, there were small things: furniture, infrastructure, but then the person was not the priority. Afterwards, the NNGO has also established rules. I think that our responsibility towards the infrastructure is ok, but it's not everything; at least the priority is the person, for the NNGO and for us too. So, for other institutions it can be to provide things, but the human aspect can be secondary, but for us, the human aspect is the priority; for them too (12.9.05/SNGOsf/fg).

The staff of the SNGO referred to education as a domain that not many NGOs in the region support. They say that almost all the other NGOs support the construction of roads, agriculture or cattle, but they normally do not support the poorest population. To this respect, they consider the status of the population to be attended as a requirement of the NNGO, that it has to be in extreme poverty. However, they attribute their work with these populations to two other factors: "It is not only Lima or we who are the one deciding the target population, but the data thrown by the diagnostics in the educational sector" (27.9.05/SNGOsm1/int).

One of the reasons for IntegrAndes to work with these communities is the physical area where the other NGOs operate, preferring to work with the farthest away communities where no services arrive.

The educational focus of the partnership is based on the idea that the organizations will not substitute the work of the state, rather to complement it. This is very important, because it brings us to the other big framework required by the NNGO: participation. This one was referred to as the only conditionality imposed in order to obtain the support, both from the NNGO to the SNGO and from SNGO to the grassroots. The Regional Director of the Norwegian Foundation tells that since the year 2002 the Northern organization decided to make official its participatory approach, communicating it to its Southern counterparts: "the NNGO considers that participation must take place at all levels, and the interventions must be participative" (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int), seeing participation as a transversal value in the development work, from the planning, the execution to the evaluation. The Regional Director refers to the past time where the organizations gave everything to the communities, but nothing was left when they retired. She says that "if the community participates, they are interested into getting results. There is no better guardian than the final beneficiary". She makes clear that:

> None of the projects financed by us is executed entirely by the counterpart. We promote the participation in the process, so that the counterparts ask for the participation of the people in specific aspects of the project. Through this participation the beneficiaries get empowered. In the same degree that they participate effectively, they appropriate the proposal, they feel that the project is theirs (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int).

Participation is understood in different ways depending on the location in the development chain. The SNGO staff refers to the paternalistic style of the social programs of Peruvian governments, creating in the people the habit of just receiving without contributing anything themselves. This is referred to as one of the biggest challenges in their work, because

> not everybody accepts it easily, but this is the right pathway. You cannot only provide and provide, but also participate, because people, even if they are very poor, if they do not have economical resources. their participation is important (12.9.05/SNGOsf/fg).

They also commented that when they ask for participation, the grassroots participants sometimes interpret it as a misuse of resources, because they perceive NGOs as having a lot of money, wondering why should they contribute with something. They commented also that people attend the first meeting expecting to get something, but when they realize that they should contribute, there are only the most motivated who remain. This is the reason why this concept entails the main feature of the work of the Southern NGO, as a strategy to go far from just giving things to people. The staff refers to the use of the participatory approach as the result of years of learning within the development domain:

> I think that the same experience, the years of work, the contact with the people, all this has made ourselves to take conscience, in the sense of how to serve the communities. The best form is not to say 'take here, what else do you need? Just take it', but rather that people understand what is best for

> them… one of our commitments, ours and of the NNGO is not giving material things to people that can be useful just for a moment. Rather, the educational space lets us strengthen people's capacities, and that is the most delicate work (12.9.05/SNGOsf/fg).

Participation is also seen as a cost-sharing strategy, urging the SNGO to look for alliances, not only within the target population, but also with local and educational authorities, as well as with grassroots organizations. They have to explain to the local actors that the project does not have big resources, being necessary to engage the efforts of all the stakeholders.

> we inform them about the institutional policies, and that we need their commitment, and they understand… here is when the participatory aspect comes, because it is not only our organization doing the work, but also the institutions and the communities (12.9.05/SNGOsf/fg).

In addition to the collaboration of the authorities, the SNGO staff enlightened about the reaction of the communities:

> people understand the message, they say 'they are not going to help us just like that; but if we are ready to participate, to collaborate, to put whatever is within our possibilities, then they are going to help us'(12.9.05/SNGOsf/fg).

These kinds of comments were confirmed during the fieldwork, through informal conversations with parents of the benefited children. As a complement for this information, the SNGO reported the outcomes of their participatory interventions. They told about the evolution that the project suffers, being them the ones taking the initiatives in the beginning, but gradually transferring the responsibility to the participants. They told about the satisfaction of witnessing the transformation from the beginning of the project to the latest year, when women dare to speak in public and express their ideas, children suggest activities or when people know already how to recognize their needs, identify the correct means to express it and look for the right channels of support, instead of just sitting and waiting.

5.2.5 "We are one hand, they are the other hand" (Shared work)

Partnership means working together, establishing an interdependence relationship in positive terms. This interdependence has to do with the idea that none of the organizations can achieve their purposes by themselves, but they need each other's special contributions. In the speech of the Norwegian General Secretary during his visit to the benefited communities, he said:

> From so far a distance, the NNGO does, of course, so little for the education of this region. In reality we depend upon the work that our partner organization does… without the collaboration of the local organization, the NNGO could do absolutely nothing for the education in this region"(CODE, 2003: 7).

In the same sense, the Regional Director considers both the Northern and the Southern institutions as different links in the development chain, each one contributing differently: "we

have the financial resource, but the counterparts have the intervention proposal, the project" (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int).

As said previously, it is important that each partner has its role well defined; the NNGO identifies itself as a financing institution, non-operative, whereas the functions of the SNGO are to "operationalize the support", in addition to find alternative funding sources to complement the project. In an interview with the accountant of the Regional Office of the NNGO, I asked him whether the amount of funding given to the project affected the decision making power:

> well, the universal idea of the institutions such as ours, (funding institutions) is very different to us, sometimes surprisingly different. For example, there is a Spanish NGO that says ' I command in the project' so they become operative institutions, acting directly over their counterparts and the project, giving money, ideas, changes. Resulting in that the counterparts have no freedom, decision power, becoming dependent. Our idea is anther. We work with local NGOs, we give them money, they make a project, but we cannot go directly to the grassroots, we give the autonomy and the authority to our counterparts over their projects. So, we cannot go to a project without our counterpart knowing it first, neither from Lima, nor from Norway. In contrast, the other institutions decide to go from Spain, for example, directly to a project without informing to their counterparts or respecting the autonomy (29.9.05/NNGOro3/int).

In the focus group conducted with the SNGO staff, they considered their function as "intermediaries"; and the coordinator of the project said that what the working team does is "using an exaggerated term, just to administrate the resources; we are like a hinge in the door, but it depends upon us that the door of support does not shut down" (27.9.05/SNGOsm1/int).

At different levels in the partnership, both in the relationship between NNGO-SNGO and SNGO-grassroots, the Northern and the Southern partners look at themselves as "just another participant". The NNGO commented about its local partners: "we want to support the organizations that strive for making good work in favor of the poorest people, through giving them a hand, an opportunity" (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int). In turn, the SNGO commented in reference to their work with grassroots people: "we put one hand and they put the other hand. We are not going to solve all their problems, they have to put their effort into it" (10.9.05/SNGOsm2/int).

This phenomenon of shared work is intimately related to the participatory approach, because it implies the involvement of several actors to achieve a goal. One of the responsibilities of the local organization is to subscribe agreements to coordinate the work between the different social actors involved in the project. During the fieldwork I could corroborate the good coordination between the local partners, especially with the educational authorities. In an interview with the contact person of the Ministry of Education for this project, I was pleased to hear him say "my job is to facilitate the work of IntegrAndes in the

schools, taking away the bureaucratic barriers that they may encounter when developing their work, giving them the necessary permissions to work in the schools and so on" (21.9.05/SNGOp3/int). This is how the SNGO makes use of its influence in the public sector, in order to open a space for the communities to be heard.

The collaboration for the project is agreed upon and planned by the stakeholders, including the two NGOs and the representative social actors in the communities. During the planning of the project, the partners share strategies, ideas, and alternatives. It was stressed during fieldwork that all the aspects of the project are defined in an operative plan, and any change to it had to be concerted by the partners. There is certain flexibility in the execution of the plans, according to the results. The accountant of the project in the IntegrAndes said: "When they [NNGO staff] come, they supervise and evaluate and see improvements, then they say 'maybe a little bit more of resources in this or that area'.

In their task of coordinating efforts at the local level, the Southern partner has the freedom of choosing the local partners that fit best to their needs and reality. They say that it is very important that the Northern NGO does not impose the kind of local links that they should establish.

> According to the approach, we have to make people participate, make all this mobilization with the educational authorities, the municipalities. Because the NNGO tells us to look for partners, other institutions to get involved in the project, but they don't tell us 'do this and this and that' because we also have our own strategies of how to intervene (27.9.05/SNGOsm1/int).

As referred to above, each of the partners has its functions well defined. While the Southern partner has the task of running the project, with all the responsibilities it implies, the Northern partner tries not to limit its contribution to the funding aspect, complementing their intervention with what they call "accompaniment". Both of them intend to respond to an expressed need, being careful not to substitute the role of the State in education; rather, they coordinate with the pertinent agents in order to affect the lives of a population. This is a relationship where different actors function as link between others, such as the Regional Office of the NNGO links the Norwegian office with the SNGO, and the SNGO is a link between the funding institution and the grassroots, all respecting each other's role.

5.2.6 "They don't asphyxiate you" (No imposition)

As I referred in the initial chapters, one of the intriguing aspects I found in the partnership relationships was whether the Northern partners imposed their ideas, decisions, strategies and goals upon their Southern counterparts, and I decided to explore this aspect in the IntegrAndes case. I realized that in order to achieve the coordinated work portrayed in the

previous phenomenon it is necessary to have the conjunction of many factors, among them, the respect between partners and the concerted participation in the decision-making. In the interview with the NNGO's accountant, when talking about impositions from the Northern institutions, he commented to have known people from local NGOs –working with other donors- that feared their funding institutions because they steer the project in authoritarian ways, trespassing the boundaries between institutions. At this point, the importance of the inter-institutional agreements is stressed, because they define the degree of freedom or interference between partners, establishing the dependence or independence among them. The accountant said that in their case, they give suggestions and instructions to the counterparts, letting the local partner apply them according to their needs, and the function of the NNGO is to check that the execution of the proposal is done in a proper way. It is worth mentioning that his interview was held at the end of the fieldwork, confirming previous comments from IntegrAndes staff in the same sense, who said:

> The approach is really important, about participating and compromising efforts. Imagine that we had found a funding institution that when I already have my plans they came from Lima or from Norway and said 'no, I want you to make something else'. That relegates you, that downgrades you (27.9.05/SNGOsm1/int).

Another member of the local organization staff said, "there is dialogue. It is not that we are only receiving orders and executing them" (10.9.05/SNGOsm2/int). In turn, the regional director of the Northern institution made clear that the project work is based upon the results of diagnoses, and decisions are taken after pilot experiences; she stated:

> …we don't determine it, the diagnoses gives us some results and then the solutions are oriented in certain directions. We do not impose any form of work, any specific experience. On the contrary, we promote participatory processes in which the target population expresses their opinion about the prioritized problems, and they suggest how could they be tackled (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int).

In another moment of the interview, she added: "the openness of Norway gives the real opportunity to the local organizations to define their work, as long as they reach the result they promise" (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int). This attitude is seen at different levels, not only observed in the NGOs' partner relationship, but also with the grassroots. Within this topic, I asked to the southern counterpart how did they feel about the intervention, they commented:

> The foundation respects our plans, and we think that it is not only our perception, but it is also the feeling of the communities. That makes that the social problems can come from beneath, from the basis. This is important, because we don't think that only the foundation or our organization is right, and that things ought to be our way (12.9.05/SNGOsf/fg).

It was interesting to hear the SNGO staff telling me about some examples of unsuccessful experiences because they did not take into consideration people's needs. In these past experiences their initiatives resulted only in the waste of resources. When I posed the

question about whether they felt that the funding agency imposed any kind of conditions, they responded:

> Imposition? I don't think so. We just simply have to respect the agreements and the commitments. In the economic area we have to inform to Lima, and they have good reasons, because the agreements have to be respected and it is part of the outer policy as well. This is very important, because they cannot only say 'I give you, take it and then you do whatever you want'… so, it is not imposition, simply a commitment and the responsibility that is mutually assumed (12.9.05/SNGOsf/fg)

Another member of the southern staff commented:

> We take it like they are contributing in the improvement of our society, and from this standpoint we see it,; never as something negative. Because sometimes it is humiliating when others come and do your things, and this is happily not happening here, there is no imposition, in the sense of 'because we put the money, we command'. No, no, there's no imposition. (12.9.05/SNGOsf/fg).

In the same way that the working plan is negotiated, the budget is not entirely defined by the Foundation. The regional director of the Foundation maintained that they are a little institution "that depends on fundraising at the end of the day", that is why even though the project is supposed to last five years, the budget is assigned every year. When I asked the southern staff about the most common difficulties in the relationship, they referred to the budget issue:

> The most common difficulties? Well, there are of different character, but mostly when we propose projects that are beyond our possibilities, in financial terms… they do not approve everything that we ask for, we have to negotiate the amounts. Everything depends upon the amount of money that exists… Then we have to adapt it to the reality; there are budgetary restrictions. For example, with the most recent work proposal we sent they told us: 'you have to shorten your goals' (10.9.05/SNGOsm2/int).

However, they stated in another part of the interview that sometimes when they send their proposal "if it is well sustained, they even increase something in the budget". The same negotiation takes place in the work of the SNGO with the grassroots. The teamwork commented that in the beginning of their interventions people asked for a lot of things, like a sport centre or many classrooms, but they have to explain the financial restrictions and "people understand". In the fieldwork, I observed that IntegrAndes staff was wide open with the schoolteachers, even about topics such as their salary.

A staff member of the Regional office of the foundation commented that for the last three years there have been some changes in relation to the openness of the NNGO, for example, more horizontality when dialoguing. However, she pointed out that there are some decisions that the NNGO has to take alone:

> We cannot forget that there are some decisions that this office has to take anyway, or the office in Norway, but this is because it has to do with the funds, because we are the funding institution. But in the last three years I think there has been a more parallel relationship, more horizontal toward the partners. We sit together around the table and we discuss, we listen to their point of view, rather than saying 'I have the money, therefore I decide' (1.9.05/NNGOro2/int).

This NNGO staff member comments that during this opening process there are still some of their partners that obey entirely what the Foundation says, whereas others dare to show their points of view, even if they are contrary. According to her, this kind of attitude is what the Foundation is looking for, that is more active partners with initiatives. She says that these partners that dare to speak out are also conscious that the NNGO "has the last word if something doesn't work, or if it is difficult to come to an agreement, but those cases are very rare" (1.9.05/NNGOro2/int). The former director of the regional office in Lima provided an interesting example of this openness. He states that when the NNGO was in the process of delimiting the focus of their work, there was the risk of directing the Foundation's work in only one area, the micro-finance. Then he spoke out and defended the position and importance of the education in the development work. He feels that the Norwegian office took him seriously and trusted him, being that one of the reasons for broadening again the vision and including education.

5.2.7 "They give us air" (Space of manoeuvre)

This phenomenon is closely related to the two former ones, but there are some nuances. Whereas the "no imposition" phenomenon relates to the Northern attitude towards negotiation and the perception of the South about not feeling oppressed, the space of maneuver refers to the "degrees of freedom" that the Southern partner has within the agreed frameworks. To this respect, the autonomy of the partner organization from the South is very important. As mentioned earlier, there are written agreements that establish the terms of the cooperation, defining the level of dependence or independence between institutions. In this case, the Northern partner has an intervention in everything that concerns the project as such, but not in relation to internal organizational issues of the IntegrAndes.

When it comes to the project, there are three persons responsible for the decisions within the Southern organization: the SNGO's executive director, the project coordinator and the administrator. They make all the decisions, but if a major change in the operative plan is going to happen, they have to consult with the Regional representation of the NNGO.

> Because we cannot simply change it just because we're executing it, change it and do whatever we want. Then there is the hierarchy; we have to talk, to tell them 'this is the situation, what do you think? Do you approve it or not?' (10.9.05/SNGOsm2/int)

The Regional director mentioned some cases where some counterparts change the plans without having consulted it with the funding institution. She says that this creates conflicts because according to the plans, the money was designated for another purpose and these conflicts with the responsibility the NNGO has toward their donors. However, both the

NNGO and the SNGO accept that there is certain flexibility to make changes to the project, as long as they are made in a concerted way between the two partners and within the established guidelines. IntegrAndes reports to have freedom of action within a margin of 10% of the budget.

It was interesting to hear repeatedly during the fieldwork the word suggestions; these refer to the direction that the Norwegian Foundation wants to give to the projects -such as the delimitation in the number of participant or the emphasis on the gender approach- but expressed in a softer way according to the flexibility and respect for the partner's procedures. As a complement to this feeling of freedom and non-imposition, the southern staff attributes this liberty to the confidence produced between the partners along the years, because they have demonstrated to be a trustworthy organization and given the NNGO reasons to respect their work in the project.

Concerning the organizational autonomy, the Southern counterpart has a directive council itself, and this is the one deciding the internal organizational issues. I asked the information secretary of the Regional office whether they take into consideration the comments or observations brought by the Norwegian volunteers working in the partner organizations in order to make decisions. She was very clear about the principle of no-intervention in the organizational life of the counterparts. She gave the example of some volunteers pointing out the vertical and authoritarian relationships between the director of a partner organization and the rest of the teamwork. She said that the role of the Foundation as a partner is just to talk to them; "as partners that we are, for the friendship that exists", "to sow a question, make suggestions or try accompany them to initiate a change, talking about the participatory processes also within the organizations, but no more than that" (29.9.05/NNGOro2/int). She said that this kind of change does not depend upon the financing institution, because the counterparts are autonomous organizations, they keep an eye out and follow up, but have no interference in internal issues. "The Foundation cannot just order them to behave in a certain way, to demand…our office does not support that" (29.9.05/NNGOro2/int).

5.2.8 "We know they know best" or "Prophets in their own land" (Value of local Knowledge)

This phenomenon of valuing the knowledge of the Southern partners and the grassroots organizations has been manifested in many examples mentioned so far. This is about trusting that the local people know best what their necessities are and that they have the elements to find solutions for themselves. The value of the local knowledge is also demonstrated when

the funding institution steps back and lets the southern partner propose their own strategies and alliances to accomplish their work. This is also manifested when through the participatory approach the local actors contribute with their own resources such as "the values of solidarity and partnership that you can still find in the countryside, in contrast to the city" (27.9.05/SNGOsm1/int). The recognition of the work of the local NGO and the grassroots organizations and the interdependence of the partners is also crucial in this phenomenon. It is very important that the Southern NGO staff comes from the same communities they serve, including the literacy teachers. The project coordinator made a remark about this:

> There is this proverb that says that nobody is a prophet in his own land, but I think the opposite. You can make innovative things because you know your reality and you even recognize where to straighten your way. Otherwise, when you don't know, you have to go round and round to arrive to a near point (27.9.05/SNGOsm1/int).

The same phenomenon takes place at a different level, when the Norwegian Foundation decides to establish regional offices with local leadership. According to the Regional director, this vision was brought

> in order to have spokesmen that can express better the reality of their countries, and stop implementing a vision with foreigner's eyes. To interpret the reality from within, and offer solutions with a local vision (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int).

The staff member of the office in Norway talked also about this appreciation of the local or indigenous knowledge:

> I think we're learning about how things are working, I think the traditional way to think that we should develop and that we knew how to do it, that is very different than the way it is now. We think that our partners abroad know best themselves, and that's one of the things I'm learning, because they have the local competence, but also specific about how they are managing things, and other parts [such] as methods of working, about [how] to approach difficult challenges, and that is something I can also share with other partners. Not only in Norway, but East Africa, for example (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

According to one of the Southern participants, an important aspect is the balance that should exist in this appreciation of the local knowledge. He refers to the switch of paradigm from imposition to participation, which at some point came to extremes when asking the people about how to do things in the participatory approach:

> They ['developers'] ask too much… we forget that education implies to guide, to take someone by the hand, but going to a direction… the important thing is that when both partners want to help each other, they have to keep a permanent dialogue (31.8.05/SNGOp1/int).

Another important aspect of valuing the local knowledge is reflected on the ownership of the project; this refers to who feels in possession of the work and the project. As said before, IntegrAndes staff mentioned that the openness of the foundation permits that the social problems are heard from the base of the population and commented past cases when they as NGO failed to do it that way. I noticed during the fieldwork that the local work and the donors do not only appreciate knowledge in the discourse, but the same people value their

own work. I could observe that people at the grassroots were really involved in the activities of the project, both in the schools and with the literacy circles. One of the school parents told me that he continued contributing to the primary school even though his children had finished school long time ago, because he sees the results of this participation to improve the community. In the literacy circles, participant women referred to it as 'our circle' and told me all the activities they do and the ideas they have; there was a certain feeling of pride when telling me that they decided how to name their circle, and also when showing some art and crafts produced by them, after having given instructions to the NGO about the kind of material they needed. As an anecdote, in one of my visits to the circles these women were celebrating the literacy day, making food. When I offered to help them, they told me in a kind way just "to relax". I interpreted it as a statement that they knew how to do things and did not want to be disturbed by an outsider who apparently did not know. Ownership and local knowledge relate in that the more the people use their own knowledge and solutions to heir problems, the more they will feel the project as theirs.

Another aspect that was referred to when asking about ownership was the existence or not of posters announcing the presence of both NGOs. A member of the Foundation commented:

> we would like people to own the project themselves. Actually we are very aware of the fact that we would not want them to say 'thank you too much to Norwegian foundation' or having a big wall with the Foundation's name, but they are putting it in some places, but it is never us asking about that. Because it is much more sustainable if people feels that "this is our project". It could be good that they have done it in relation to a partner, but it is good that they think that is something done by themselves. But that has been something difficult to promote, sometimes, because, talking about perceptions, I think that sometimes partners feel that "oh, yes, the Norwegians would like to see their names everywhere" but actually that is not the case, we would like the partners to say, well, not the partners, actually, the people. So, local ownership is not IntegrAndes' ownership, it's the people's (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

She compared this attitude to other international NGOs who paint their names on big walls in order to make their presence known. In this case, it is not the NNGO the one manifesting its presence directly, but it is the local partner who transmits the information. In my observations I noted that indeed, the names of the NGOs were in placards, but proceeded by the names of the other local actors, such as the scholar community, the parents association and the education authorities. The same staff member commented:

> it's nothing wrong in itself, because having these kind of signs does not mean necessarily that it is not local ownership. So, our role is more like to be sure that it is a local ownership. Even though the logo is there, fine. If they had problems having the logo of a Norwegian organization, that is fine too, in a way. If that is important to them, ok. Because, I guess, if they are doing it, there is a reason for it. If that is making them more proud of their school, ok, it's fine with us (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

Another comment made by the Regional Director was that even though they do not demanded the presence of the NNGO's name everywhere, she considers it important that the population knows about the institution that is supporting the project, because they are representing a group of donors that want to affect the lives of the communities and have a message. In contrast, the information secretary said she has also noticed that some communities did not know about the existence of the Northern partner; in other cases, "people knows about the Norwegian Foundation and thanks them for their support, but they know that it is their participation in the activities that support and maintains the project" (31.8.05/SNGOp1/int).

During the conversations with grassroots people, they expressed their desire of having Norwegian people coming and telling them how the Norwegian Educational system works, in order to learn from it. The fact that this is not happening reflects the deliberately intention of the NGOs of not imposing foreign models. Rather, what IntegrAndes does is to make use of the local organizational dynamics of the grassroots when coordinating the community actors and constituting local partnerships.

5.2.9 "We know they won't be there forever" (Encouraging sustainability)

This 'Encouraging sustainability' phenomenon refers to the effort made by the local organization in order to sustain itself in the future, without depending on the funding of the Northern partner. This independence is also encouraged by the NNGO in different forms, through a non-subsidies policy and capacity building activities. The accountant of the Foundation, who has worked in the regional office since it was installed, pointed out that in the 1980s and early 1990s, the tendency was to finance the totality of projects, but more recently the Foundation's position has changed. Beside the guidelines determined by the Foundation, that were mentioned in the Frameworks phenomenon, they have the policy of not creating dependence, neither in the beneficiaries of the project nor in the Southern partners. The Norwegian General Secretary said in his speech:

> Let me tell you about an aspect that is very important for us in the Foundation, concerning sustainability and self-development. We sincerely believe that it is a sin to create dependence on foreign resources; people are not getting liberated (CODE, 2003: 6).

This policy is taken into practice when the Foundation asks to its counterparts to define, as a part of their proposal, forms in which the local organization will contribute with a part of the resources for the project, as well as mechanisms in which the project and the organization will continue functioning despite the withdrawal of the Foundation and its support. These contributions of the Southern partners are supposed to gradually increase, in order to prepare

for the moment when the external funding comes to an end. In the case of IntegrAndes, the Norwegian Foundation gives the 60% of the project expenses, the rest, 40%, is raised by IntegrAndes through collaboration with the municipality, the educational authorities and the people at the grassroots level.

This phenomenon relates also to the temporality of the project, because the Northern partner accompanies the Southern institution until this has achieved the agreed goals and is strong enough to walk alone:

> The principle is in the sense that even from the very beginning we should count on fading out. So, it's no unlimited project. So the partnership could last for a long time, but the projects themselves should have an end, always. We shouldn't just stay there and put in money (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

In the Southern perspective, this phenomenon takes two directions. One is about the sustainability of the project, and the other refers to the survival of the organization as such. For the educational project, IntegrAndes receives funding exclusively from the Norwegian Foundation as a Northern partner. The mechanisms to complete the expenses have already been described. The written agreements determine the possibility of the creation of partnerships with other institutions, stating that the relationship is not exclusive with the Norwegian Foundation and the possibility of accessing other kinds of resources. When IntegrAndes applies for such alternative esources, they prefer to use them in independent projects, not mixing them with the ones granted by Norway in order to have a clear administration of funding.

It is very important to point out that IntegrAndes' staff is aware of the eventual retirement of the Northern support and they expressed it in various ways:

> It's a fact that that the Foundation will not always be there. Sooner or later, the support will stop. So, the challenge is to think about what to do after that (10.9.05/SNGOsm2/int).

This consciousness is also about both the hazard of working in the NGO sector in Peru and what it represents, as in any other private institution where it is easy to get fired, and the incapacity of the state to provide employment. Toward these circumstances, the staff has already considered alternatives of survival, as the withdrawal of the support would not be a surprise. These alternatives consist in the strengthening of their capacities through the fundraising courses provided by the Northern partner. In addition, each member has taken the initiative of studying in a Master's program in organizational studies or in education. This in order to "increase the human capital… it is a challenge to study, but if we don't do it, we're going to be left behind". Their alternative plan is to function as consultants if there is no way of continuing with the NGO work:

we believe that we're not failing as an institution, we have to keep moving forward; even if there's no more support from the Foundation, we have to keep going. We cannot say 'if they retire we fall down, we cannot stay in that position, our thinking has changed in that respect (10.9.05/SNGOsm2/int).

The staff is continuously applying for alternative funding, although the time dedicated for this effort is restricted by the time invested in job and school. Despite this workload, one of the IntegrAndes' employees said in an informal conversation that one of his satisfactions while working in this NGO is the possibility to keep studying.

I have already mentioned that the capacity building offer from the Foundation consists of courses. Furthermore, the Foundation promotes an annual meeting with all the partners in the region, and one delegate from Norway presents experiences of other regions, in order to share information and promote some innovative ideas. In addition, part of the accompaniment that the NNGO offers consists in the networking among the partners and the partners and other institutions. Despite these efforts, some of IntegrAndes employees manifested a desire to learn from other partners, from their results. They recognize the efforts made by the NNGO in order to train them, but they feel that it is not as systematic as they need. They also commented that there is not a rubric in the expenses of the project that talks about the training for the staff. This last issue can be understood by the NNGO's desire to use most of their resources in benefit of the target population, not specifically in building capacity among their counterparts.

I noticed that the slogan of the NNGO is "help to self-help". I asked it's the Foundation members in which form they applied this slogan in relation to their Southern partners. The response was that this is primarily considered to express the working method with the people at the grassroots level, but 'self to self-help' also expresses one of the peculiarities of the NNGO: that it cares about the growth of its Southern partners:

One way of focusing on this slogan is about having an end to a project. That is telling the partner that from the very beginning, you have to find out how to survive when we withdraw. Then they know that this will not last forever. So if they think that the support is not going to last a long time, then they have to build in mechanisms that show that when the Foundation will withdraw, it could continue. So, for instance, that is part of the reports and the annual plan that the partners. give [us]; they also fill in some kind of way of how this is going to work further that gives a *push,* in a way, to think about it. (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

As a last comment about this phenomenon, the answers I got from the grassroots about what would happen if the support suddenly did not come anymore, they said, "we have learnt at least" and they value all the experiences they have acquired from the interventions.

5.2.10 Being different

This phenomenon involves the factors that make these organizations feel different from other NGOs working in the same domain. This distinction is at different levels: as international or local organizations, as the partnership relation they sustain with their counterparts and some aspect of the partners' working methods.

There are many reasons for IntegrAndes to feel different. Some of them have already been mentioned, such as the fact of working within the educational field, differently from the other NGOs in the region that work mainly with agriculture, and in addition to having a developmental approach, they have a pedagogical one. They also feel different because of working with the most marginalized population in the Andes, that other NGOs do not reach, in addition to the use of participatory approaches, in contrast to the paternalism of the other local NGOs. Another special feature of this local organization, according to the staff, is the fact of being funded by a Norwegian partner: "there are many organizations working with Germany, Spain, Italy, even Switzerland, and we are the only ones that are not with the majority. We are different because we are not with the common funding countries" (16.9.05/SNGOp2/fg),. This peculiarity motivates the Southern partner to make efforts to spread information about Norway: they have had the initiative to publish a book that talks about this Nordic country, and a member of the Southern NGO explains why the7y made the decision to publish such a book:

> to make people know how much Norway iscollaborating with Peru, how much the Foundation is supporting the Latin American countries, because not a lot is heard about Norway. You hear about Spain, Germany, but since Norway is a little and distant country, you don't hear about them (27.9.05/SNGOsm1/int).

The Northern partner has also pointed out some features that distinguish them from other international and funding institutions. In the first place, they referred to their history, because compared to other international NGOs that were founded in the 1950-1960s, they are quite new, having started in the mid 1970s.

> [our organization] started as a fundraising organization. And then [the work was] just giving money to some mission project mainly. And then it developed into being more of a development organization, and I think that it was not really the classic one way doing from Norway and abroad. I think that organizations having history back to the 50s, or 60s have more of that kind of thinking of 'developing others'. But I think there has been a development from, yeah, all of the last 20 years (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

There were other comments from the Regional Office staff about the differences between the Foundation and other institutions. The Regional Director said that, for those who know something about the aid for development field, "Norway is characterized by its openness, and

the possibilities that are given to the counterparts to define their own work". The information secretary said to this respect:

> Interviewee: According to what I have heard about other funding institutions that work in the country, we are a much more open organization. I think that has been a growing process that allows us to change. But compared to other international institutions working here, they have more with a vision like 'I'm above and you are under'
>
> Interviewer: like power?
>
> Interviewee: sure, power. And in that sense, I believe that our counterparts perceive that it is possible to converse with us. Even if it is Norwegian (the NNGO) we are like more open people (1.9.05/NNGOro2/int).

In another moment of this interview, the Director said that even if the counterparts know that the Foundation has the economical control, the difference with other funding institutions is that this Norwegian NGO is interested in the growth of its southern counterparts. The strengthening process is not only for the target population, but also for the local NGOs.

The working method is another particularity of the Southern partner organizations . The Regional Director commented that other funding institutions initiate their relationships with southern counterparts based on a pre-established project, designed from in the North:

> It's like a package already done and the Southern counterpart has just to implement it. It is the funding institution establishing all the rules. In our case it does not work like that. We look for institutions that look for resources in order to develop their proposals, in that way we respond to an expressed need (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int).

During the interview with the project leader in the SNGO, he commented about the same issue, stating that he knows about other organizations, where the project manager has to coordinate all the details of the operative part with those people in charge in Lima. In those cases, the people of the funding organization give instructions different from the ones decided by the local NGO when visiting the project

> …that cracks all your plans and then you miss authority, which is not sound, it's not helping. That is why it is better just to accompany us(27.9.05/SNGOsm1/int).

As the most distinctive feature of the Northern organization, one staff member stated:

> I think we are quite early working very consciously about partnership. I think that more and more organizations now are working through partnerships. But I think not very many organizations are having local staff in the regional offices (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

In cases different from the studied partnership, the relationships are characterized by the exclusive transference of money, where the partners meet once or twice a year and the funding institutions just asks for a report. The difference with this Norwegian foundation is that they are interested in accompanying the counterpart in the process of planning and implementation of the proposals. By accompanying they mean:

> We visit them, participate in their main activities; this is basically in order to know how the processes are developing, and seeing if the planned activities are really achieving the sated goals. Then, we are in

a permanent dialogue with our counterparts, in relation to their projects. That is accompaniment, monitoring their processes (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int).

This comment illustrates a way to check whether the funds are being used correctly, which leads us to the next section's main subject: accountability

5.2.11 "No surprises" (Reporting, need of control, transparency)

Within the aid for development field, the quest for transparency and accountability is an inescapable issue. Reporting is considered then the necessary evil and this case study is not an exception: it is a requirement set by the Foundation to deliver financial reports that ensure the good use of resources and the achievement of goals. To this respect, the Norwegian Foundation has gone through a period of transformation; the staff of both IntegrAndes and the Foundation commented that these changes have been notorious in the administrative area, especially in the last years. In the beginning of the partnership, the reporting practices were more or less informal, responding to general and loose norms, and IntegrAndes reported mostly "their way" and the Foundation was "content" with this; visits to the projects were the most common way for the foundation to get information. Changes occurred when the NNGO started to establish more concrete formats to organize the reports, and especially after the introduction of a project assistant as part of the Regional Office staff. From this point, goals and more concrete indicators were formulated in order to have a closer and more meticulous following up of the counterpart's projects, preventing the unexpected changes of route that where a common practice in the past.

In turn, IntegrAndes staff commented on their perceptions towards the reporting and auditing activities. They differentiate their experience to the common understanding of what an audit is in the Peruvian context: "if you have an audit, in Peru, this is for burying you, not letting you breath anymore" (27.9.05/SNGOsm1/int). In contrast, they point out that what they have done until now permits them to organize their work, measure if they have reached their objectives and appraise how committed the different actors are; that gives the Foundation a basis for continuing the investment. They also remarked about the importance of the fluid communication between the partners while reporting:

> If they tell me that I have to inform, here it is! And then we're accomplishing the plans. But if you don't do it, of course you're going backwards, and then it creates some mistrust. But for us, we don't have any problem with that. There's communication. If they ask us for information, here you go! Achievements… here they are! (27.9.05/SNGOsm1/int)

In addition to commenting on the beneficial part of the audits, they said that the parties agreed on the content of these reports in advance; there are no surprises. Moreover,

IntegrAndes staff understands the reasons for the need of accountability, not feeling it as an imposition, but as part of the mutual commitment and shared responsibility between partners.

It is very important to point out that this accountability practice takes place at different levels, not only reporting from SNGO to NNGO. IntegrAndes has to be accountable to its other partners, i.e. the diverse actors implied in the project, including the local authorities, the grassroots organizations and national authorities such as the Peruvian Agency of International Cooperation (APCI for the acronym in Spanish) that regulates the international funding to local NGOs. Another important recipient of the information about the work of IntegrAndes is namely the Norwegian public that represents the Foundation's constituency.

A term that is very often interchangeably used with accountability is transparency. For IntegrAndes staff, transparency means "to demonstrate in a clear and opportune way, based on the budget, which are our activities, our expenses; informing to the community, to the authorities" (10.9.05/SNGOsm2/int). They state that for there to exist trust, there most be transparency, and this helps them to maintain the relationship in good form. They are aware that the Foundation trusts them, because "otherwise, they wouldn't give us anything".

The Norwegian Foundation understands transparency as reports or any information that could be required at any moment. For the local representation of the NNGO, there is a clear difference between trust and accountability, in the sense that in some cases, partners that have been working for a long period can sometimes interpret accountability as a lack of trust. The regional director refers to the cultural component of taking for granted the trust and any call for accountability can be taken as offensive, that the audits are a threat to the trust.

> On occasions, when the relationship is prolonged, they think that asking for information is an attempt to trust, and this is not a lack of trust. This is important. I think that the transparency and the responsibility toward the budget management cannot be taken for granted, 'because I have the trust of the Fundation and then I can do whatever I want'. All the organizational decisions about the project implementation have to be consulted between the counterpart and the cooperation institution. Those are good governance practices, of good administration. It happens often that in the Southern continents, and in this one specifically, they think that 'we are friends and you shouldn't distrust me, because I get offended' (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int).

For the NNGO it is important to respect the acquired commitments and the negotiation with the SNGO if there's any change. For them, this is part of the chain of commitments with their donors and in the same sense IntegrAndes has a commitment with the Foundation. This is a point of convergence between the Regional Director of the Foundation and the staff of IntegrAndes. The latter made reference to the necessity of having a certain level of hierarchy in conducting the project, because the office in Lima is the one reporting to Norway, and they

respect that. They are also clear that accountability is crucial for the NNGO's credibility in their home country, "we cannot do whatever we want" (27.9.05/SNGOsm1/int)., they said. The reporting is then, seen as "normal" or at least "fair" to ensure that the money is well spent. During fieldwork, I observed the importance that the implied actors confer to the written information. I understood this as a kind of protection to demonstrate the accomplishment of commitments between the partners at the local and North-South level.

It is important to note that the accountability represents a big part of the workload for the SNGO staff. Some external observers who I talked to, such as the Norwegian volunteers and other co-workers, noted that it is evident how the stress in the IntegrAndes office increases during this kind of reporting period. Another Southern partner referred to the bureaucracy that surrounds their work. This partner refers to the contrast that exists between a technical and an idealistic approach, when for the former the importance resides in the paperwork and numbers, "all that is ok, but they tied me gradually" and he added: "I understand the economists, but if we want to achieve something in the development education, I think that it is more important to have an honest heart dedicated to understand the poor" (31.8.05/SNGOp1/int). He implies that these formalities have increased in the past years, but he had to learn to live with this, otherwise the support will not come, and "only with all those signatures they believe that the project is running well" (31.8.05/SNGOp1/int).

During the several conversations with the different partners, I noted that this pressure is felt as coming exclusively from the office in Lima. This is important because at some moments the southern partners would perceive the office in Lima and "the foundation" as two different things, while in reality the Regional Office is the decentralized organ of the Norwegian Foundation. Thus, the ones responsible for demanding transparency proofs are the local employees of the Northern NGO. In contrast, the accountant of the Foundation's Regional Office offered a positive view of this decentralized organization: when the NNGOs do not have presence in the country, there is not much contact with the local partners, making it more difficult to control that the money is being used in a proper manner; and it also affects the possibility to accompany the Southern partner.

Another important component of accountability is the transfer of information. This is part of the give and take process that characterizes partnership, and as such, the information flow is in both directions. I have already mentioned the kind of information flowing from IntegrAndes to the Foundation that concerns the evolution of the projects. In turn, the Foundation uses the annual reunions with all its counterparts to inform them about the activities they do and the eventual changes of policy that the organization adopts.

Information is also transferred when there are visits from the Foundation office in Norway to Peru. IntegrAndes then gets general information about the Foundation's work in other regions; they also get informed about the overall budget, and how this is distributed in their region with the other counterparts, but not in a formal and written account of all the economic movements. A reason was given for it:

> …some would ask whether they could have all the Foundation's budget, and that is one thing that we've been discussing sometimes, and in a way it would be good in terms of equality. If one thing is going one way, it should go the other. Also maybe there are very good reasons for doing that, but at the same time I think it could create more confusion, because reading a budget like that when the countries are so different is very difficult, it's very difficult to understand without knowing enough about the price level or the differences between the countries … I think that just giving a lot of information that people don't really have the sufficient background for, there is so much background that I think that just giving it because it would just kind of satisfy the equality, in words, would maybe not strengthen the partnership, maybe the other way around because it would create so many questions that we could not reply in a satisfactory way (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

It is very interesting to observe that the same phenomenon takes place at the other level. Even though IntegrAndes staff is very open with the communities about their finances and even their salaries, they consider that there is no point in delivering to them a detailed financial report, which is readable for them and for the foundation, but not necessarily for the grassroots. They made it clear that this kind of information is given at the leadership level in the communities, because there is the risk that the broader population can misinterpret when hearing the amounts of money designated to the project. IntegrAndes does it as a strategic procedure, because they know that informing too openly would truncate the participation process, having people interested only in the material benefits. One of the Norwegian volunteers considered that if people knew how much money IntegrAndes deals with, it would harm the organization more than benefit the population, because people would not understand in terms of money proportions and what the money is used in, like the amount they use for administration.

Other aspect of the information transfer process is the type of channels used for this purpose. Both organizations use magazines in order to inform about their work. The NNGO uses these publications in order to inform to its Norwegian constituencies about how their donations are used, but also to show to the Southern counterparts where their work reaches.

5.2.12 Balancing the unbalance

I mentioned in the previous phenomenon that the idea of hierarchy is present in this partnership. In a general sense, this hierarchy is understood as existent at an organizational level; IntegrAndes staff is conscious that the regular channels of communication are through their executive director to the regional office in Lima, and then to the main office in Norway:

> …we cannot skip the levels from here directly to Norway, we simply cannot do those things. There's an order in that sense, we have to respect the decisions of the superiority, but that doesn't mean that we're tied, it's just part of the administration (10.9.05/SNGOsm2/int).

It is very important to note that despite the desire of the foundation of portraying itself as one more of the partners at the same level, the unbalance between the partners is admitted:

> I think that money is worth something. The fact that we are having the money and them not having it, is a fact in a way that you have to see that it is there. But you have to see that it is still possible to reduce the influence of that. It could be for instance in the way of communicating; to the extent possible I think it is important not to put ourselves in a power position. I think… yeah, it could be in the way of behaving, the way of treating each other, not using it unnecessarily as a pressure, for instance. I mean, if you're having the money you could consciously use it in that negative way, because it is a power position. But you could use it as little as possible when it is not necessary. But I mean, unconsciously, I think that it's happening that the partners know that "if you do something that the Norwegians should not like at all, then we know that that would be risky". That unconscious thinking is probably there and we cannot… it's there in a way, but you could try to avoid its effects as much as possible (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

The communication between the regional office and the counterparts has evolved to a more horizontal mode in the last few years. However, the information secretary comments that it is difficult for some counterparts to leave aside the vertical idea of relating due to cultural factors. Among these cultural factors, another member of the NNGO mentioned the colonial past of Latin America that might incite the Southern partners to place themselves in a lower position vis-à-vis Europeans.

> they probably think often that Norwegians are the ones to decide, and they think, even though, according to the rules and the hierarchy we are not, but it is the mentality in, not only in development work, but it could be in, from the times of colony. And it's still a part of some people's mind and lives. So I think in that sense it could be an unequal relationship from the ground (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

Conversely, IntegrAndes staff perceives the hierarchy strictly at an administrative level in this partnership, but not in the personal interactions occurring in the relationship. They also contrast the Latin American idea of hierarchy to what they have experienced in this partnership with a Norwegian organization:

> When you see a gringo, a Norwegian, what you see is a modest and humble person, I mean, you don't see him like 'the gringo is more'. Usually, the Peruvian, the Latin American thinks 'you are the boss, with a tie and everything', there's a hierarchy in all aspects, from the appearance to the character, because sometimes they think that the authority and respect have to be imposed by marking the differences. But I think that this has to be done by dialoging, with good communication that is the base for trust. We have seen it with the Foundation. They come and converse with us, they are not almighty; in other words, they just teach us, that's the good thing. For example, I have seen the Norwegian General Secretary, he is a very humble person, who likes to participate and communicate… those kind of things are good to learn (27.9.05/SNGOsm1/int).

In addition to these kinds of attitudes toward the Southern partner, the Foundation's Regional Director thinks that the responsibility they are bearing in the fight against poverty balances the fact that having the money could signify the control of the situation, "one thing for the other" she said (1.9.05/NNGOro1/int).

There are some other mechanisms that the Foundation puts in practice in order to balance the unbalance between the Northern and the Southern partners. One of the most important is the decentralization process of the Northern organization. The informants mention that at the beginning of the Foundation's presence in Peru in the early 1990's, all decisions where taken from Norway, and the Regional Office was directed by a Norwegian; the office in Lima served just as a channel for sending the projects proposals. This model has been modified by conferring more authority and power of decision to the Regional Office, which run by Peruvians, determines the budget for the local projects; in turn, the Central Office in Norway establishes the vision and the policies, being both units the same institution with a Northern and a Southern face.

Through this mechanism, the Foundation believes that it is much easier to get closer to the partners, because the local representatives have the possibility to talk in a more horizontal way to local people, through a direct dialogue in the same language. In addition, they can go more in depth, because they have the time and they have more of the context to ask the right questions and understanding the reality. "… It is a lot easier to make a partnership there than to make it from Norway" (27.10.05/NNGOho/int). It was also mentioned that the presence of Norwegians would not help to attenuate the power unbalance; one member of the Regional Office said:

> …having a Norwegian or any other foreigner [at the office], the communication is not the same. If it is already a little difficult to maintain a more or less horizontal relationship among us that are local, then imagine with the foreigners!…We as locals understand better the way of thinking of our compatriots; it is true that there are many differences between the urban and the rural life, yet, they are not so broad as the differences between Latin America and Scandinavia, at least the differences that are basic for understanding each other (1.9.05/NNGOro2/int).

Talking about partnership implies different views of the various actors, and the ideas that they are having from each other. When I asked the Norwegian member of the Foundation how she thought the Southern partners perceived them, she answered:

> I think that also what many south Americans for instance are saying, at least when I'm traveling, they often express the fact that it's easy to communicate in the same level, because I think in Norway we are more often having more of a flat structure whereas I think in South America is more a hierarchical structure, I think; and approaching a leader is really an authority and scary and those things (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

5.2.13 Communication at different levels

I have already mentioned some forms in which the partners use to communicate, such as the written reports and the institutional magazines. Furthermore, a very important way of interacting is the direct and personal contact among the partners at all levels. In a strict and organizational order, the function of the Regional Office is to serve as a link between the

Southern counterparts and the Head Office in Norway. The information secretary in Lima mediates this communication due to, among other reasons, the difference in language. She perceives language as a disadvantage for the Southern counterparts, and she wishes that at least one of the members of each counterpart spoke English. The information secretary portrays as a big challenge the responsibility she has as a channel of communication, trying to keep it fluid and balanced. In a parallel mechanism, the contact of the Foundation with the grassroots is mediated by the SNGO, mainly in the information they get about each other.

Despite the rigid structure, there are spaces in which all levels of the organization can get together and have a direct dialogue, namely, the visits from the foundation staff -both from the head and regional offices- that are made to the southern counterparts and the communities in which they work. These visits are part of the already mentioned accompaniment, and are planned at least twice a year for each project of the Southern NGOs. Different actors in the partnership perceive the visits in different ways, but a common point of view is that the act of coming, especially from Norway, to the communities makes them feel valued and taken into account by their Northern partners, contrasting with some authorities that have never been to these faraway regions. The Foundation's intention when visiting is "a way of saying 'you're important to us and this partnership is important'" (27.10.05/NNGOho/int); it could show interest and they feel closer, in the partnership as such". IntegrAndes staff experiences the visits as a positive stimulus too:

> Their presence makes us take new and fresh air. That helps, because when they come it is not felt as one above the other, that one looks from the top down and the other from beneath up, we look at each other as equals, right? We have the trust and that permits us to talk clearly (12.9.05/SNGOsf/fg)

These spaces for interaction permit that the Norwegian General Secretary of the Foundation can take a direct dialogue with the staff working directly in the operative part of the project, exchange ideas or express points of view. However, as mentioned before, language can represent an obstacle for completely direct communication, and to this respect IntegrAndes staff expressed the desire of learning their language, if not Norwegian, at least English, because they feel they loose a lot in the translations. It is important to point out that the visits from Norway are few, because according to the decentralized structure of the Foundation, it is primarily the role of the Regional Office staff to keep in touch. This is the reason why both IntegrAndes staff and grassroots people expressed their desire of "more visits from the Foundation", meaning the people from Norway. These comments were not surprising considering that on occasions the Regional Office is viewed as only a representative of the NNGO in Peru, but not as the Foundation as such.

Most of the informants reported an interesting side of such encounters. This is the fact that when Norwegian visitors come, time is mostly spent in celebrations and cultural expressions, and very little is left to talk about the work made in the projects and see the reality without this "glamorous picture". In contrast, local staff of the Regional Office succeeds in this attempt to talk on a more daily basis when visiting the projects alone, being able to access both the successful and not successful stories, for finding solutions together.

Perceptions about each other play an important role when partners interact. It is important to make the distinction of the opinion about the Norwegians that people from the grassroots are having, in contrast to the perceptions of IntegrAndes staff as co-workers. While the latter see Norwegians as non-threatening authority figures to whom they can speak openly, I observed that people at the grassroots idealize the image of the "gringos" as someone superior to them, a romantic idea of a benefactor. However, a very important feature of this idea is that it results as an explanation of the comparison of Norwegians to other foreign donors or investors that exploit the natural resources of their region, often worsening their living conditions.

Another component of the interaction between partners that helps them to get better known acquainted with each other on a day-to-day basis is the Foundation's cultural exchange with volunteers working with the Southern counterparts. The interaction between these youngsters, the SNGO's staff, and the communities enables a direct contact between the South and the North in a more horizontal and closer setting. This is the scenario where learning from each other takes place, constructing and reconstructing the ideas that all have about each other, because "the perceptions change as people meet".

5.3 Linking Partnership ideals with reality

The literature portrayed partnership as an ideal status, where many elements should concur for partnership to exist. Many authors affirmed also the frequency in which partnership only reaches a nominal stage due to the little willing of donors to release the control of the situation, even though they say the opposite in the discourse. This section of the chapter has as a goal to make the initial links between what literature says about the characteristics of partnership, and apply these concepts to the reality of the studied case. For this, I condensed the main features depicted by the literature as necessary in a partnership relationship and located them within the phenomena obtained after the categorization of the raw data. As Table 5.1 shows, features of partnership portrayed by the literature were found in the field. In the next chapter, a reorganizing of phenomena and theoretical features of partnership will

serve to formulate a deeper analysis to understand how partnership is perceived, experienced and understood in this case study, and how theory and data interplay.

Table 5.1 Partnership characteristics of the literature located in data phenomena

Partnership characteristics according to literature	Phenomena in which the characteristics are present
Shared sense of purpose; common goals, shared perceptions clearly articulated goals	Binding partners
Mutual respect	No imposition Value of local knowledge
Sharing of information in a two-way exchange	Reporting, need of control Exchange
Shared responsibility and clear delineation of responsibilities	Exchange Shared work
Sharing of skills, institutional development	Accompaniment Encouraging sustainability
Joint decision making	Shared work Space of manoeuvre
Shared and reciprocal accountability; transparency with regard to financial matters;	Reporting, need of control
Joint membership rights and democratic participation	Balancing the unbalance No imposition
Minimum of shared values such as gender equality, democracy, political commitment to poverty elimination	Frameworks Binding partners
Mutual trust	Space of manoeuvre Binding partners
Honest communication, opportunities for sharing and discussion; positive tensions; a process for adjudicating disputes; constructive advocacy, willingness to negotiate	Communication No imposition Shared work
Flexible governance, recognition of other partnerships	Encouraging sustainability Space of manoeuvre
Interdependence: complementary strengths, each partner would give their contribution; shared resources and common enjoyment of the benefits	Exchange Shared work Value of local knowledge Binding partners
Performance indicators and mechanisms to measure and monitor performance,	Reporting, need of control No imposition
Notion of reciprocity, with give-and-take; mutual support	Exchange Accompaniment Binding partners
Long-term commitment to working together, temporality	Encouraging sustainability Shared work
Realistic expectations and perspectives;	No imposition
Significant and equivalent reward structures	Shared work
Understanding of each others' political/economic/cultural contexts and of institutional constraints;	Communication Balancing the unbalance
Openness to learning from each other	Exchange

5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I presented the data obtained from the fieldwork in Peru and Norway in September 2005; they were organized in a set of phenomena obtained after a thorough categorization process. I organized these phenomena in what I called "the Partnership Tree" and described it including the difference voices of the implied actors, in order to maintain a balanced account of how the partnership is experienced in the field. It is important to remember that the form in which the data were arranged implies already an interpretation of the reality. I made the initial links between the partnership literature and field data by locating the partnership characteristics into the described phenomena. In the next chapter, these data will be linked to the literature review in order to better understand how partnership is built in this case study.

6. Discussion: Filling the gap between partnership 'sayings' and 'doings'

After giving a comprehensive description of the situation in the field in the previous chapter, I will present here the re-elaboration of the concept of partnership that results from these phenomena combined with the elements presented in the literature review chapter. Since this is an ongoing analysis, some new elements or concepts might emerge in order to better understand the partnership relationship of this case study. When necessary, I will quote again some of the words said by the informants or the authors cited in the literature review that illustrate accurately some point of this analysis. All these, together with my personal interpretations, are elements that will serve to respond to the research questions.

In the first section of this chapter I will employ the diverse models and typologies portrayed in the literature, in order to locate this case in the different scenarios described by the authors in chapter 2. In the second part, I present my own interpretation of the case, rearranging the described phenomena to make broader connections within a theoretical framework.

6.1 Matching theory and practice

6.1.1 Re-understanding partnership

In the previous chapter I presented the phenomena that compose the broader concept of partnership. These elements portray a net of interrelations between the Northern NGO, the Southern counterpart and the grassroots organizations (GROs). In the literature, the ideal partnership relationship was represented as the intersection of the three components (Figure 2.3). In this case, after exploring the interaction between all the participants, I can conclude that partnership is more complex than expressed by Padrón (1987). One of the more evident contrasts between Padrón's model and this case is the linking role that IntegrAndes plays between the NNGO and the grasrrots organizations. In Figure 6.1, the purple mark indicates the connections that are not taking place in the partnership studied, i.e. the direct interaction between the Northern organization and the grassroots by their own.

Figure 6.1: Partnership according to Padrón (1987) modified
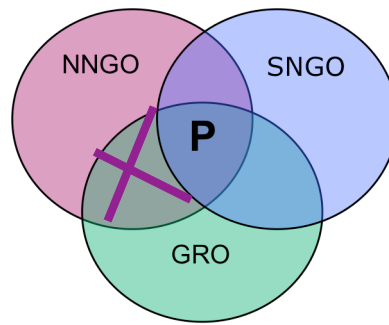
Source: Adapted from Padrón, (1987: 73)

Partnership as studied in the field is still not that simple, there are many other factors shaping it. Figure 6.2 represents a more elaborated model of how partnership takes place, delineating some important features:

Figure 6.2: A more complex model of partnership

Foundation's head office   Foundation's regional office   IntegrAndes   Local authorities & other local partners   Grassroots
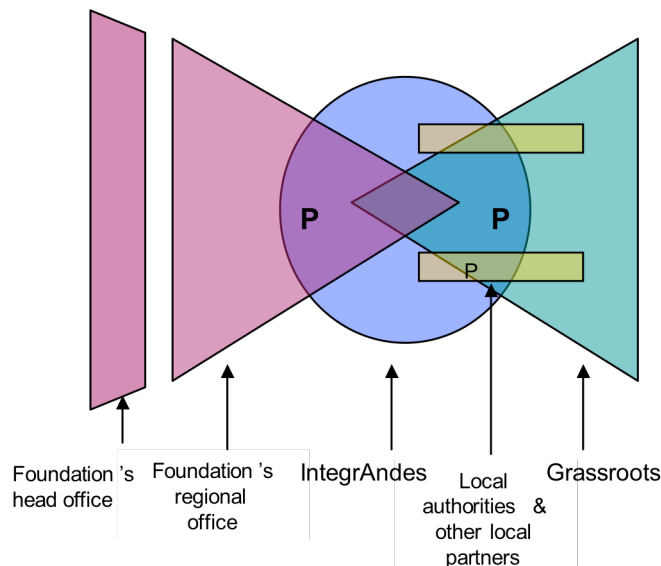
The figure to the left illustrates the Northern organization, represented by its decentralized organ in the South. The circle in the middle is the Southern NGO, functioning as the linking element for all the other actors. The triangle to the right represents the grassroots organizations and the target population. A new element of this model is the inclusion of some other stakeholders, such as the national and local authorities -like the municipalities and the education ministry- represented by the horizontal boxes; Padrón (1987) did not take into consideration this group of stakeholders. In contrast to figure 6.1, the interaction between the grassroots and the Northern NGO takes place within the locus of action of the Southern organization. Another reason for this interaction not to happen, and relate them as direct partners, is that, in the supposition that partnership means equality, there's no such

component in the relationship between Norwegian NGO staff and grassroots people, which does not mean either it is true between the Northern and Southern NGO, but the gap is less.

The mediated relationship between NNGO and GROs is due to the Norwegian Foundation respecting the working area of their Southern partners, and the authority they confer to them vis-à-vis the target population. In concrete terms, the direct contact between the NNGO and the target population happens in activities organized by the SNGO, like the visits that the Foundation's staff renders to the communities. The diamond in the centre of the circle represents this direct contact. In other cases, referred by the literature and some informants, the direct contact and influence of the NNGO with the grassroots goes in detriment of the SNGO's autonomy and sovereignty. In his model, Padrón (1987) mentioned that when the Southern organization is placed in the middle of the NNGO and the GROs, there is a danger of being squeezed between the functions that the Northern imposes, and the desire of representing popular interests of the GROs. In this case, the clear establishment of roles diminishes this risk, because the Norwegian Foundation does not consider IntegrAndes just as a "necessary evil" or the "operational cost"; rather, IntegrAndes is considered as the institution that has the local knowledge and relations to accomplish the project. On the other hand, the relation of IntegrAndes with the GROs is one of collaboration, not political representation.

The fact that IntegrAndes has a crossroads function has some implications. Differently from Padrón (1987), who depicts partnership as only one between all the actors, this model considers various partnerships happening simultaneously. In Figure 6.2, these partnerships are also represented by "P". One partnership takes place between the Northern and the Southern NGOs -which is the unit of analysis in this research- and is evidenced in processes such as the accompaniment, monitoring and reporting of the activities and capacity building seminars. In these interactions, the other actors do not participate actively. Parallel to this NNGO-SNGO partnership, there is a close collaboration between the SNGO, the local authorities and the grassroots groups. Participation has a determinant role in this second partnership, when all the stakeholders get together in the joint planning of the project, including the NNGO in the initial phase. When the project is functioning, the NNGO steps back and performs roles of monitoring and accompaniment to the SNGO. From this moment, the interaction between the NNGO and the rest of the actors is mediated by the SNGO. The third partnership that is happening is the coordination between IntegrAndes, the educational and municipal authorities and the GROs in the daily activities of the project.

6.1.2 A typology of North/South collaboration

In order to depict the kind of relationship that the Norwegian Foundation and IntegrAndes hold, it is very useful to follow the typology of North-South collaboration, elaborated by Elu and Banya (1999) and presented in Table 2.1 in section 2.3.5.

According to the different sorts of relationships between Northern and Southern NGOs described in this typology, I believe that the case of IntegrAndes fits in the "visionary patronage" and the "collaborative operations" types. In the first because the Norwegian Foundation and IntegrAndes share the same vision about development, i.e. taking the person as a priority and not giving material gifts that are useless in the long term; they also share the value of participation in the development process. The participants expressed this matching vision, saying that it would be more difficult to work with a partner that does not share their view. The terms for evaluating and reporting are pre-established by both partners, this is why they commented that "there are no surprises" when the time of audits comes. Moreover, as the 'visionary patronage' establishes, IntegrAndes implements a common project, and the Norwegian Foundation funds it and gives support with other resources such as the capacity building of the SNGO.

On the other hand, the "collaborative operations" type of North-South collaboration establishes that both the Northern and the Southern partners share the power of decision making over the planning and implementation of the joint programs. In this case study, it was described how both institutions agreed on the terms of the project, in the referred "operative plan". This plan indicates the goals to achieve and the parameters to determine the achievement of results. Furthermore, it was established on many occasions that the decisions over the project are shared: no changes are made without it being consulted between the two partners.

These two are the types of collaboration with which this case study corresponds. However, I would like to comment about two other types that gradually approach to what Elu and Banya (1999) consider the ideal collaboration model for the NGOs. The first one, called "mutual governance" says that both the NNGO and the SNGO have decision-making power or at least substantial influence over each other's policies and practices, at both the organizational and program levels. In the studied case, this condition is present only at the project level, not at the organizational one,. As I described in the previous chapter, each organization conserves its autonomy and the mutual decisions that are taken together concern exclusively the common project. Since it has been stated that total equality is not possible in practice, the mutual governance would result in little influence of the Southern organization

in the Northern one, and an influence that would become intrusive from the Northern partner to the Southern. This is why I believe that the respect for the autonomy of each institution is sound.

Elu and Banya (1999) state that the stage of "sustainable development" in which the southern partner is completely responsible for the projects funded by the Northern partners, without the latter's involvement, is the ideal model of collaboration for the Southern NGOs. This model would take us back to Padrón's (1987:73) example of the feeling "let the gringos give us the money and respect our autonomy" that I referred to in chapter 2. I believe that a balance would be more beneficial, and this is represented in the relation between the Norwegian Foundation and IntegrAndes. In this case, IntegrAndes has a broad margin of action, and they can decide in most parts of the project until the decisions represent a big cost or a drastic modification of the project's approach. The Norwegian Foundation feels that even though their priority is not having a strong presence in the communities, they still have a voice in the project. However, the fact that the Foundation can intervene in some decisions of the project, does not make IntegrAndes staff feel it as an imposition. Rather, they call them "suggestions" that the NNGO emits about the project.

In contrast to the complete freedom that the "sustainable development" stage confers to the SNGO, the balance I mentioned gives IntegrAndes staff someone to be accountable to, both the Foundation and its constituencies in Norway. The very staff of IntegrAndes expressed it when affirming that they cannot do whatever they want, because there are people in the donor country expecting results and transparency from their work.

6.1.3 From 'pre-partnership' to 'Partnership'?

Continuing with the exercise of locating this case study into the models proposed by the authors in chapter 2, I consider relevant to compare how the partnership between IntegrAndes and the Foundation is placed in relation to the model called "Partnership Development Continuum", designed by Mullinix (2002) and presented in section 2.3.6. As a short reminder, this model locates partnerships in a continuum fluctuating from a 'pre-partnership', to a 'partnership' to a 'Partnership' phase, depending on nine dimensions that indicate these stages. In the table below, the shaded areas represent the stages I consider the partnership of this case study is found.

Table 6.1 Locating the case in Mullinix's (2002) Partnership Development Continuum

Dimension	Description	**P**re-partnership phase	**P**artnership phase	**P**artnership phase
(1) Focus of Interaction	The primary purpose behind the partnership	Getting to know each other	Working to achieve mutually valued objectives	Developing and implementing programs together
(2) Activities/ Projects/ programs	The work undertaken during the course of the partnership	*Limited* -specifically defined relationships which allow organizations to become acquainted with each other	*Opportunistic* - organizations work together because it is convenient and appropriate (a good match)	*Integral* –organizations develop joint programs or activities that grow directly out of common skills and interests
(3) Time and Orientation	The length of time and orientation of the association	Short-term, nonspecific	Specified/longer-term, objective/activity oriented	Open-ended goal/mission oriented
(4) Benefit	The benefits accrued to partners	*Increased Networking*- Organizations develop relationships and skills	*Increased Capacity*- Organizations are able to do more and/or access more resources than they could alone.	*Increased Status* - Organizations are able to become more than what they would be alone
(5) Trust and Respect	The development, extent and locus of trust and respect between partner organizations	Building trust and earning respect	Trust and respect exist among a limited number of key staff members	Mutual trust and respect throughout partner organizations
(6) Organizational Structures	The degree to which organizational structures are autonomous or integrated	Completely autonomous	Separate but coordinated	Appropriately integrated (e.g. exchange of staff/board)
(7) Organizational Strategies and Information Access	The degree to which partners coordinate their organizations strategies and share information	Separate strategies Public information shared	Separate but coordinated development and pursuit of strategies Proprietary information exchanged	Proprietary information and strategies developed and marketed together
(8) Locus of Influence	How organizations utilize and conceptualize their locus of influence to promote individual or partner-based interests	Separate	Shared or differentiated according to expertise and capacity	Integrated, with acknowledgment of expertise and capacity
(9) Written Agreements or Contracts	the existence and/or focus of written agreements between partners.	None	Written agreements or contracts focusing on the specific roles of each organization in the implementation of a given project/ activity	Written agreements or contracts highlighting broad areas of mutual interest and commitment to work together.

Source: adapted from Mullinix (2002)

As a brief summary, the partners of my case get together in order to accomplish goals they have in common, but an important aspect is that the projects are an initiative of the Southern partners, who find in the Foundation the economic support and accompaniment activities; thus, the "spirit" of the project is an IntegrAndes' idea. This partnership benefits both partners, because as they sated, each one is a "link in the chain of development", counting each one with their special contributions. In general, the formal relationship is defined by the five years the project lasts, which gives the possibility to plan in the medium term; still, both organizations are open to continue the relationship, not necessarily in a project form, but

eventually as a cultural exchange. The benefit of this partnership is an increased capacity, because the NNGO reaches populations that they otherwise could not reach, and the SNGO has access to resources they otherwise could not afford. The dimension of trust and respect, in this case, has reached the 'Partnership' phase, which is expressed by a NNGO member: "now I feel that the whole organization really feels like a partnership with the Foundation, not only [among] the leadership, I think that it has trickled down to the whole thing" (27.10.05/NNGOho/int). This comment reflects that the mutual trust and respect is throughout the entire partner organizations, not only among a limited number of key staff members of each organization. The organizational structures, as I will discuss deeper in a later section, are still independent from each other, but this autonomy permits still a good coordination. The information they share is mainly concerning the common project and the strategies within it. However, the Foundation informs about changes in the organizational strategy that eventually affect the project's implementation. Concerning the locus of influence, both IntegrAndes and the Foundation promote their work based on the capacity that the interdependence with their partners brings. And last, there exists a written agreement that stipulates the functions and obligations of each organization in relation to the common project.

In general terms, this partnership is located more clearly in a 'partnership' phase, with some traits of a 'Partnership' phase. The latter is, as much of the literature states, an ideal situation, which I consider difficult to attain due to the disparities among partners, not only in the economic domain, but also in aspects such as size, capacity and area of influence.

6.2 Interpreting partnership

The literature review presented in chapter 2 portrayed the evolution of the relationships between donors and recipients of aid for development, having as a common trait donor countries that exerted their power in a coercive manner, using means such as conditioning funding in order to impose their interests to the recipient nations. These practices take place mainly at the macro level, when the bilateral agencies trade with national governments; still, such acts can also happen at the more concrete level of the NGOs.

Nonetheless, after the adoption of the paradigm of partnership the discourse changed, converting donors and recipients into partners. This new rhetoric assumed both Northern and Southern partners as able to act in equivalent conditions; equality was then presented as a pillar for the partnership discourse. In spite of this, according to the authors cited in chapter 2, the exertion of power only took a subtler form, making the Southern partners even wish for actions that in reality favour northern interests (refer sections 2.2.5 and 2.2.7). Even more

important, it was established that the facts that one of the partners is in possession of the money and the flow of resources goes always in the same direction, makes such equality unattainable.

Partnership was then, portrayed as an essentially asymmetrical relationship in which 'uppers' and 'lowers' interplay. Central to this discussion is not only the existence of the asymmetry, but also, and foremost, the failure to acknowledge it. I approached this aspect of partnership in section 2.2.6, and indicated that the lack of recognition of the unbalance could carry the danger of not challenging the power relationships; this can be an obstacle because the relation is founded on unrealistic assumptions. On the other hand, I also referred to the denial of the asymmetry could impede seeing the opportunities that accepting the unbalance could bring.

6.2.1 Accepting the unbalance: some are 'more equal' than others

After having provided a thick description of the concrete situation of the partnership held by the Norwegian Foundation and IntegrAndes, I considered this aspect of the literature review as the most important element that distinguishes the studied case from the literature: the particularity of this case resides in the fact that the participants –mainly the Northern partners- are aware of these differences, they acknowledge them and act in consequence.

The content of the phenomena in the previous chapter includes some examples of the consciousness about the power unbalance, and illustrates some points brought out by the literature review. Here I provide some examples:

In section 2.2.5 of the literature review it is mentioned that "the new paradigm of partnership may not remove selectivity or indirect conditionality" because it implies "a situation where the North chooses partners according to whether they fulfil certain other essential criteria" (Dower, 1998 in King, 1999:16). The "binding partners" phenomenon (section 5.2.3) gives account of this awareness, when the interviewee of the NNGO in Norway admits that they have the power of definition about who they establish a relationship with, or not, depending on the approach of the projects and the areas where the obtained funding was directed to. This phenomenon depicts also the diverse criteria that the southern partners should reunite in order to be chosen as a counterpart of the Norwegian Foundation. Those are mainly general moral values and the coincidence of goals between both organizations; these values are intended to permeate both the relationship between the partners and the work to accomplish the project. The NNGO was very clear in this respect:

"there are basic things that we are not ceding, so [if you don't agree] you should probably find another partner" (27.10.05/NNGOho/int). The regional director recognized also that the possession of the money could imply having the control of the situation, but she said that this power is balanced with the responsibility that their task in developmental work signifies.

Another phenomenon that exemplifies the power of definition of the northern partner is the "frameworks" one (section 5.2.4). These are the guidelines defined by the Foundation to shape the work of the counterparts. It was mentioned in the previous chapter that education and micro-financing are the two areas that the NNGO supports, and the Norwegian General Secretary announced this in his visit to IntegrAndes, inviting the counterpart to ask for support in these delimited areas. In addition to these two domains, the NNGO is very clear about the participatory approach that should characterize the work of the counterparts with the grassroots. The question here is not whether these values and guidelines are positive and useful or not. The main point is that they are requested by the Northern partner and the Southern counterparts share them or eventually adapts to them, and most importantly, the Northern and Southern informants recognize this fact.

Two more examples are provided in the phenomena of "no imposition" and "balancing the unbalance" respectively. In the first one, the information secretary of the Regional office declares that the southern counterpart is aware that in case of not being able to solve a conflict through dialogue and agreements, it is the Foundation the one having the last word, even though this kind of cases are infrequent. The second example is the appearance of the term "hierarchy" in a relationship that supposedly is horizontal. Southern partners recognize the Foundation as an authority, an entity being above them in organizational terms.

The last phenomenon that reflects the greater amount of command of the Northern partner is the "reporting and need of control" (section 5.2.11). The literature review proclaims that "this is a dialogue of the unequal, and however many claims are made for transparency or mutuality … the reality is - and is seen to be - that the donor can do to the recipient what the recipient cannot do to the donor" (Elliott, 1987:65). This fact is demonstrated in the reporting activities that IntegrAndes renders to the Foundation, but this does not happen in the other direction. The Foundation staff recognizes this fact and explains it in the following way:

> …some would ask whether they could have all the Foundation's budget, and that is one thing that
> we've been discussing sometimes, and in a way it would be good in terms of equality, if one thing is

going one way, it should go the other, also and maybe there are very good reasons for doing that, but at the same time I think it could create more confusion also, because reading a budget like that when the countries are so different is very difficult, it's very difficult to understand without knowing enough about the price level or the differences between the countries … I think that just giving a lot of information that people don't really have the sufficient background for, there is so much background that I think that just giving it because it would just kind of satisfy the equality in words, would maybe not strengthen the partnership, maybe the other way around because it would create some many questions that we could not reply in a satisfactory way (27.10.05/NNGOho/int).

Either way, the lack of equality is acknowledged: on the one hand, in the fact of not reporting financially to the Southern partners, and on the other, on the lack of the necessary conditions to understand such information in case it was provided.

6.2.2 Balancing elements

So far, I have given examples of how the asymmetry in the relationship is acknowledged by the Southern and –mainly- the Northern partners in the field. Due to the importance of this trait of the studied partnership and the literature, I will centre the rest of my discussion in the mechanisms that operate in this partnership that serve to balance the inescapable inequalities. As with all partnerships, this one is not free of conflict; this is why I will also discuss elements that challenge this equilibrium.

In order to better understand how all the phenomena -that emerged during an earlier phase- of the analysis enhance the opportunities that the fact of accepting this asymmetry offers, I grouped them into clusters that depict different kinds of elements.

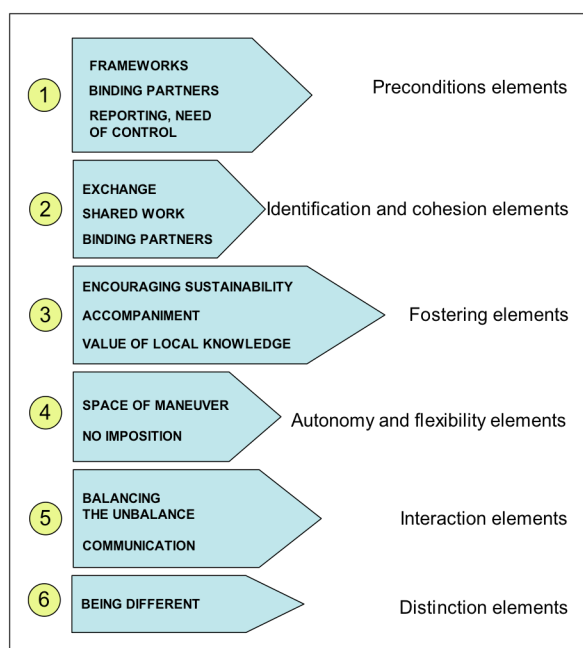*Figure 6.3: Phenomena grouped in elements conforming partnership*

Figure 6.3 shows boxes containing phenomena that together represent defined types of elements composing partnership. Again, for analysis purposes, this is an artificial separation

of components. I now proceed to describe briefly the features of each type of element, followed by the interpretation of how they interact in order to foster or hinder a balanced relationship between partners.

1. Precondition elements: *reporting, need of control- frameworks- binding partners.* These phenomena, among other things, include the conditions required to the Southern partner in order to participate in this relationship; they have already been introduced as the elements that incite partners to recognize the differences in power of decision in general terms. I did not name them "conditionality" elements because this word was not used during fieldwork and it frequently has a negative connotation. Moreover, Kenneth King (1999) employed the term "precondition" in the reviewed literature. The concept of accountability plays an important role here.

2. Identification and cohesion elements: *Shared work – exchange – binding partners – evolution*. These are the elements that create the identity of the organizations as such, but also as partners. These components give a feeling of belonging to the institutions and being part of this partnership, stressing the features they have in common. Elements involved in phenomena such as 'shared work', 'exchange' and 'binding partners' give to the members of the organizations the bases for working together, for functioning as a team. They also shape the identity of the partnership and include what they share, give to and receive from each other.

3. Fostering elements: *accompaniment- encouraging sustainability- value of local knowledge.* These include all the capacity building efforts that strengthen the competences and knowledge of the SNGO. These elements reflect a step back of the NNGO, what "pushes" in some way the SNGO to look for their own resources and achieve independence, counting with the backup of the Northern institution in this process. These elements reflect the preoccupation of the Northern partner to prioritize the knowledge and experience produced in the South.

4. Autonomy and flexibility: *No imposition – space of manoeuvre*. These are the elements that allow both partners, but mainly to the southern ones, to have a breathing space, liberating them from the common impositions –masked or explicit- that the literature points out. They are intimately related to the autonomy that each organization enjoys, in spite of being part of a partnership, and the efforts to convert the communication channels from vertical to horizontal through open dialogue.

5. Mechanisms of interaction: *communication at different levels- balancing the unbalance.* This is a very interesting group of phenomena due to the personal interrelationships that it

implies. These elements conform not only the actual interactions between partners, but also the perceptions and ideas that they are having about each other and broader concepts lying beneath them.

6. <u>Distinction elements</u>: *being different*. These elements cover mainly the phenomenon of "being different" which has already been described. This is the reason why I will not go deeper in the analysis of these elements in this chapter. This might seem a small element compared to the others (i.e. containing only one phenomenon), but it touches many of the other phenomena groups, in the way that both organizations feel special compared to others in many aspects: the kind of work they do, the region where they work, but more relevant are aspects such as how they approach partnership and how they interact with each other. I will review the distinction elements in the next chapter.

Figure 6.4 presents the basis of this discussion: the way in which the acknowledgement of the lack of asymmetry, triggered by the precondition elements, develops some mechanisms to balance the collaboration in this partnership relationship. These mechanisms are found in the identification, fostering, autonomy, and interaction elements, impregnated by a feeling of being different from other cases.

Figure 6.4: Interacting elements for a balanced relationship
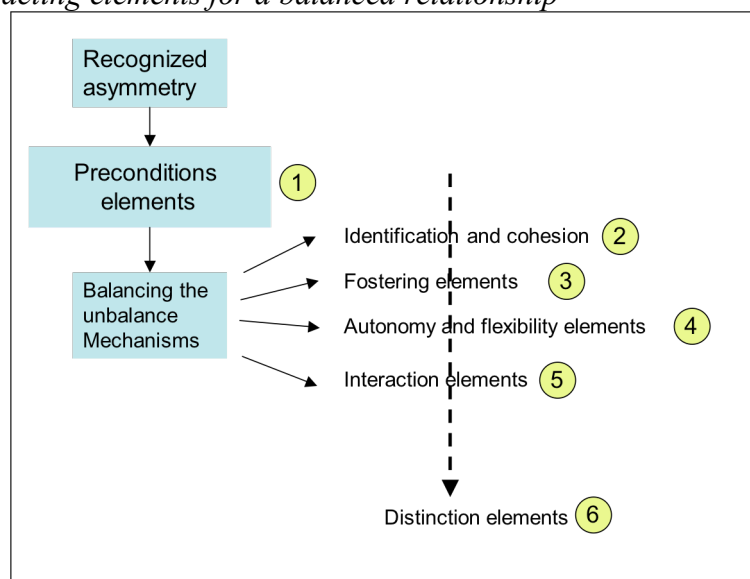
Even though I have already discussed many of these points in the findings chapter, in the next sections I will discuss in a more extensive manner how the components of the different types of elements interact in order to balance the partnership. But before that, I will introduce one theoretical referent that will serve to support the analysis.

6.2.3 Analytical support: Freire's liberation theory

After I decided to approach the discussion in the terms described above, I identified that there are some clear parallelisms between Paulo Freire's Liberation theory and the scenario that surrounds the dynamics between donors and recipients of aid or development, which I revisited at the beginning of this section. It is not the intention of this chapter to present the extended theory that Paulo Freire exposed from 1970 in his *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (1970/1999); rather, the idea is to bring to the discussion some of its elements that will help to understand this relationship between donors and recipients of aid for development, or in this case, Northern and Southern partners.

Freire (1970/1992) refers to a world characterized by the contradiction between *oppressors* and *oppressed,* terms that correspond to the concepts of 'uppers' and 'lowers' depicted by Chambers (2003) introduced in chapter 2. Freire affirms that a "reality which becomes oppressive results in the contradistinction of men as oppressor and oppressed" (Freire, 1970/1995:33).

For him, the oppressors exerts a dehumanizing power upon the oppressed, impeding both of them to accomplish their "ontological vocation" of being human. He says that "any situation in which 'A' objectively exploits 'B' or hinders his and her pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression." (Freire, 1970/1995:37). This kind of relationship can be observed when, for example, donors impose conditions that impede recipient countries to determine their own forms of how to achieve development. This attitude leads to another element of an oppressive situation identified by Freire (1970/1995), namely, prescription:

> One of the basic elements of the relationship between oppressors and oppressed is the *prescription.* Every prescription represents the imposition of one individual's choice upon another, transforming the consciousness of the person prescribed to into one that conforms with the prescriber's consciousness. Thus, the behavior of the oppressed is a prescribed behavior, following as it does the guidelines of the oppressor. (Freire, 1970/1995:29)

This attitude results analogous to donors' old practice of deciding what the less developed countries need in order to reach the desired 'developed' stage, reflected in the numerous projects executed in the name of the poor without their involvement. In the same manner, Freire describes clearly the shift of rhetoric as follows:

> The oppressors, who oppress, exploit, and rape by virtue of their power, cannot find in this power the strength to liberate either the oppressed or themselves. Only power that springs from the weakness of the oppressed will be sufficiently strong to free both. Any attempt to 'soften' the power of the oppressor in deference to the weakness of the oppressed almost always manifests itself in the form of false generosity; indeed, the attempt never goes beyond this. In order to have the continued opportunity to express their 'generosity', the oppressors must perpetuate injustice as well. An unjust social order is the fount of this 'generosity', which is nourished by death, despair and poverty." (Freire, 1970/1995: 26)

Freire's postures are known for being radical. However, this false generosity could be found in the efforts of some donors who follow a double discourse, who adopt the new rhetoric of partnership but in reality continue the old dominatn practices. For Freire, the only solution for this oppressive situation to be overcome, is that the oppressed become critically aware of their situation, *concientização*. However, in the case of the oppressed, it is not enough to surmount the contradiction with recognizing him or herself inserted in this situation, but they should start the struggle through a reflected action (praxis) to liberate both themselves and their oppressors.

> The same is true with respect to the individual oppressor as a person. Discovering himself to be an oppressor may cause considerable anguish, but it does not necessarily lead to solidarity with the oppressed. Rationalizing his guilt through paternalistic treatment of the oppressed, all the while holding them fast in a position of dependence, will not do. Solidarity requires that one enter the situation of those with whom one is solidary; it is a radical posture." (Freire, 1995:31)

It would be unfair to claim that all donors, for the mere fact of being in a position of an oppressor in Freire's terms, cannot act out of the limits of a false generosity. Freire (1970/1995) also considers this scenario and says that in this oppressive situation, "an issue of indubitable importance arises: the fact that certain members of the oppressor class join the oppressed in their struggle for liberation, thus moving from one pole of the contradiction to the other. Theirs is a fundamental role, and has been so throughout the history of this struggle." (p.42)

For this conversion to be true, it needs to be a radical act, in which the converted should be humble and truly trust in people; they cannot longer stay as they were. "Only through comradeship with the oppressed can the converts understand their characteristic ways of living and behaving, which in diverse moments reflects the structures of domination" (p.43). It is in such a context that a true partnership can find a place.

Liberation is then, the ultimate condition that results from this struggle between oppressors and oppressed:

> Liberation is a childbirth, and a painful one. The man or woman who emerges is a new person, viable only as the oppressor-oppressed contradiction is superseded by the humanization of all people. Or to put it in another way, the solution of this contradiction is born in the labor which brings into the world this new being: no longer oppressor nor longer oppressed, but human in the process of achieving freedom." (Freire, 1970/1995:31)

It might be a daring comparison the one I am about to do, but due the context in which partnerships between Northern and Southern NGOs takes place, the attempts to construct a true partnership would parallel this struggle for liberation. In the way that this contradiction between oppressors and oppressed is transformed into a situation in which there are no more

oppressors/oppressed but rather free humans, partnership can be the arena in which there are no more donors and recipients, but true partners.

What is interesting in this comparison is not only the result of this struggle, but the process to achieve it. There are many elements in Freire's *Pedagogy of the oppressed* that reflect this search for partnership:

· The fact that there are "converted oppressors" who truly solidarize themselves with the oppressed cause.

· The mechanisms that act in the oppression situation such as the prescription.

· Some important means to liberation, among which dialogue takes a central role.

· The fact that no one liberates themselves, but this is a mutual process.

There is another central concept in Freire's theory that matches with this analysis: the "banking concept of education". This concept is developed in an educational framework, but it is equally applicable to other situations:

> In the banking conception of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable, upon those whom they consider to know nothing. Projecting an absolute ignorance onto others, a characteristic of the of the ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as a process of inquiry" (Freire, 1970/1995: 53).

This banking concept of education can be paralleled to the "donor-recipient" practice in aid for development, when donors used to come to the South with "ready-to-wear" solutions against underdevelopment, or more recently, in the partnership era, when Southern partners are mere depositories and administrators of the Northern partner's money. This situation impedes Southern development of its own capacity, and the contradiction is still not resolved between donors and recipients in order to become "partners".

In opposition to the banking concept, there is the libertarian education. According to Freire (1970/1995), the humanist, revolutionary educator's efforts

> …must coincide with those of the students to engage in critical thinking and the quest for mutual humanization. His efforts must be imbued with a profound trust in people and their creative power. To achieve this, they must be partners of the students in their relations with them. The banking concept does not admit such partnership- and necessarily so. To resolve the teacher-student contradiction, to exchange the role of depositor, prescriber, domesticator, for the role of student among students would be to undermine the power of oppression and serve the cause of liberation (p.56).

This 'problem-posing' education requires the willingness of the teachers, or the Northern partners in the development partnership context, to give up the power position and enhance the critical thinking of the students –or Southern partners. Education must then, begin with the solution of the teacher-students contradiction, "by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers *and* students" (p.53) learning from and teaching each other.

6.3 Making broader connections

It is not my intention to portray in this study the specific Northern actor as an oppressor, nor the concrete Southern organization as one being oppressed in the whole sense described by Freire. Rather, the purpose is to make the links between this theory and the global situation between donors and recipients of aid for development, using some of the elements to explore how this concrete partnership takes place in their search "for mutual liberation".

In the next section, the mentioned components of liberation theory will appear in the discussion of the partnership elements introduced earlier in this chapter (section 6.22). In addition, I will use some other concepts from the partnership literature, such as accountability and ownership, among others.

6.3.1 Precondition elements

These elements could be also called "the necessary evil", because they are inescapable in a NGO cooperation relationship between the North and the South. I have already described these elements when referring how the partners recognize the asymmetries in the relationship. As commented earlier, aspects as the reporting activities reflect this power unbalance, but they are necessary in order to maintain transparency, which in turn strengthens the likelihood of continuing the partnership. However, "both Northern and Southern NGOs face major hurdles when it comes to work together in a project. Some of them are bureaucratic in nature, which directly affects the relationship between the two organizations." (Elu & Banya p.202).

Nevertheless, the Northern organization acknowledges their power, which in Freire's terms means that the Foundation has recognized itself as pertaining to the oppressors' class. In this way, the Northern partners are the referred "converts"; but not being as simple as that, they need more than to simply proclaim their solidarity, their biggest characteristic should be to have faith in people. Otherwise, "the converted who approaches the people but feels alarm at each step they take, each doubt they express, and each suggestion they offer, and attempts to impose his 'status', remains nostalgic towards his origins" (Freire, 1970/1995:43).

This trust in their Southern partner is reflected in the perception of IntegrAndes staff. On the one hand, they do not feel the reporting activity as an authoritarian imposition. Rather, they feel satisfied of being included when the contents of the reports are defined. On the other hand, as referred to in section 5.2.11, they feel that the Foundation trusts them, because otherwise "they wouldn't give us anything". This is why in this interplay between a

partner who trusts its financial resource to the other, the concept of accountability plays an essential role.

For Edwards and Hulme (1996: 967) accountability is "the means by which individuals and organizations report to a recognized authority (or authorities) and are held responsible for their actions". Based on this definition, Ebrahim (2003) discusses the different dimensions that accountability can take. He and differentiates between the direction of the accountability into upwards, downwards or to self; at the same time, the difference between and *internal* and an *external* accountability "is both about 'being held responsible' by others and about 'taking responsibility'" (Ebrahim, 2003:814); the last distinction is between a functional and a strategic accountability, depending on what is accounted, the use of resources or long term impact. All these are properties of five key accountability mechanisms, i.e. reports and disclosure statements, performance assessments and evaluations, participation, self-regulation and social audits, which take the form of tools or processes. I will centre the attention into the three firsts, because they are the ones found in this partnership case.

In Ebrahim's terms, the accountability that is taking place in this partnership would be characterized mainly as *upwards, external,* and *functional.* It is upwards because the main reporting activities are from IntegrAndes to its funding institution, the Foundation. The information is primarily about the activities in which the money is spent, which constitutes the reports. This accountability contains mainly detailed financial information, which, to a certain degree, can constitute a disclosure report to for example, the Peruvian Agency of International Cooperation (APCI). The accountability is external because IntegrAndes directs the reporting made toward an organization different than themselves, and it is functional because the information is centered on short-term achievements (every year). These reports constitute what Ebrahim (2003) calls "tools" of accountability, because they function to achieve it. This upward accountability is also practiced when the grassroots report to IntegrAndes about how have they been using the received support and presents the same characteristics.

The downward accountability takes place to a lesser degree. It is suggested that "while functional accountability of NGOs to patrons, operationalized through reports and accounts, is typically high in practice, functional accountability to clients and NGOs themselves is low" (Ebrahim, 2003: 815). I referred in the findings chapter that even though there is no financial reporting downwards, there exist transfer of information from the Foundation to IntegrAndes and from IntegrAndes to the grassroots. However, it is important

to differentiate the kind of information that goes upwards and downwards; while IntegrAndes reports to the Foundation all issues concerning economic and operative part of the project, the Foundation informs about their activities and achievements obtained in other regions, as well as eventual changes in their policies. On the other hand, the grassroots give information to IntegrAndes about their activities concerning the project, while IntegrAndes informs also about the activities in a regular basis. However, the economical information downwards takes place once, namely at the beginning of the co-work with a school or a community.

Other elements that are presented as 'tools' in accountability are the evaluations. These tools can take an external or internal character too. In the first case, an external evaluator assess the achievements of the NGO, being in most cases the donor assessing the results of the funded organization in order to determine further funding. Internal evaluations happen when the organizations evaluate their own achievements, while hybrid evaluations take place when internal and external evaluators accomplish it. In the case of IntegrAndes, since the informants referred to their working approach as participatory at all levels, the hybrid evaluations are the most common. While in the field, a letter from the Foundation arrived, announcing the dates of the evaluations, and indicating that the evaluation committee would be integrated by one member of the NNGO, one of the SNGO and a third member, with a 'neutral' character to be chosen by the other two.

An important aspect of evaluations is that they can serve to increase the capacity of the SNGO, in the measure that the evaluators and evaluated are willing to "encourage the analysis of failure as a means of learning" (Ebrahim, 2003:818), rather than focusing in reports and goals achievement that most of the time emphasize the success stories in order to assure funding. What I noted during fieldwork when asking about accountability and reporting, is that these reports were centered to very concrete and measurable indicators, leaving aside other processes that are not so easy to assess.

Ebrahim (2003) presents participation as one of the accountability mechanisms that are considered a 'process'.

> *Participation* is most often taken to mean involvement 'by common people' (i.e., by non-professionals) in various types and stages of development work. Frequently, these people are intended beneficiaries of the work that is undertaken. When that is the case, one commonly refers to the involvement as 'people's participation'. But participation may also denote involvement by a range of other stakeholders with different interests and abilities (Dale, 2000:162).

According to Ebrahim (2003), participation can take different forms, but the one present in the IntegrAndes-Foundation partnership is that including "public involvement in

actual project-related activities" (p.818). This happens when the communities have an active role in taking decisions about the kind of contributions they will make to the project.

It is interesting to combine the evaluation tools with the participation process of accountability. According to Ebrahim (2003), "downward accountability can also be enhanced through participatory evaluations" (p.819). If the provided definition of participation is taken as a basis, the kind of evaluation performed by IntegrAndes and the Foundation is not strictly participatory: what they refer to as "participatory evaluation" concerns mainly to the inclusion of the SNGO, but not necessarily of the other stakeholders, such as the communities. It is here where the contact of NNGO with the GROs referred by Padrón would be useful. In addition, enhancing downwards accountability could be another factors that help to balance the unbalance in the partnership relation.

In this section I have described how the inescapable precondition elements are present in the relationship, how are they perceived and accepted by the partners and how precondition activities such as accountability take place.

6.3.2 Identification and cohesion elements

These elements, as explained in their brief description, constitute what make the partners identify with each other. In the findings chapter I described how issues such as the values of the organizations and their mission have to match with each other in order to function as partners, and in the preconditions elements these matching values are the selection criteria that the NNGO uses to choose its counterparts.

In this case, Freire's theory is present not only in the relationship between partners, but also in the framework that structures their work in common. The common values are reflected in the slogans of both organizations, which in turn are in correspondence with Freire's idea of initiating the conscientization of the oppressed (in this case the impoverished communities they work with) in order to set off a change in their lives. The slogans "Help to self-help" of the Foundation and "Change to advance" of IntegrAndes reflect the importance of the participation of the 'common people' in their own development. In Freire's (1970/1995) words, their work is framed in the following way:

> To surmount the situation of oppression, people must first critically recognize its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation, one which makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity (p. 29).

This common mission of the two institutions to fight against poverty is what can portray them as part of the 'converts' group depicted by Freire, whose role is not to 'show' to the target communities their oppressed condition, but to help them to discover it through education.

Both organizations act according to the humanitarian reasons for participating in development work that were explained in chapter 2. In this way, both IntegrAndes and the Foundation share a concept of development that goes beyond infrastructure building, but that rather takes the human being as the central component. It is important to point out that these shared values are not imposed from one partner to the other. Rather, the convergence is the result of a joint learning in some cases, and the reunion of previous ground values in other.

The partnership literature says that one of the asymmetry sources in the relation is that the flow of resources goes always in the same direction: from North to South. I have already described in the exchange phenomenon that in this partnership case, there are many kinds of resources other than financial ones that are exchanged; this is one of the mechanisms that balances the relationship. What is important here is that both organizations are open to both receive and give, they do not counter each other but rather complement mutually, building this partnership together. Figure 6.5 illustrates this resource exchange, showing the direction of the flow and the contributions of each partner:

Figure 6.5: Exchange flow chart
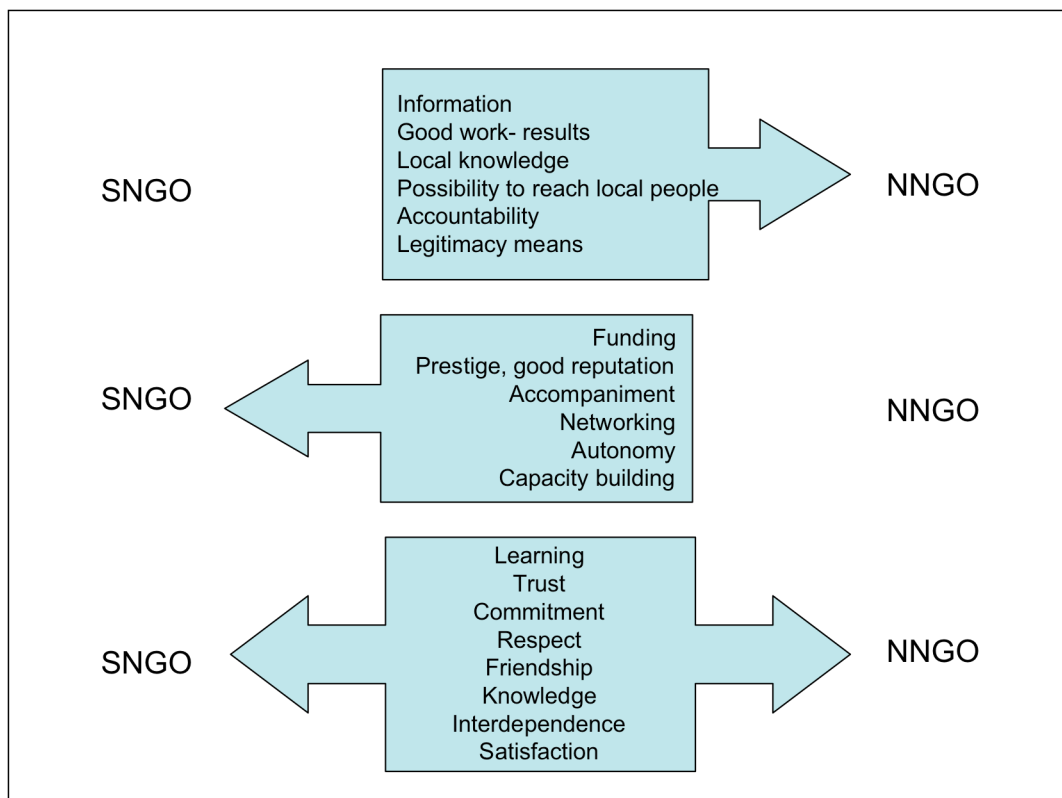
This figure shows the 'give and take' process, in which learning, information, and other resources are shared, in which for example, the Foundation obtains legitimacy means toward their constituencies in Norway through the good results of IntegrAndes' work. This is a very

important issue, because on the surface it would appear as though the Northern partners only give their resources without getting anything back. Quite the opposite, their benefit is not monetary at least not initially, but it comes in the form of prestige in their home country, which in turn is transformed into more donations from their constituencies.[16]

However, as pointed out in chapter 2, Degnbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen (2003:148) argue that "cooperation is seldom based on organizations in equal need of each other". This is a very important observation, because interdependence does not necessarily mean equality; this is why it is difficult to put equality into practice. Being conscious of this reality, the Foundation staff comments:

> The fact that we are having the money and them not having it, is a fact that you have to see that it is there. But you have to see that it is still possible to reduce the influence of that. It could be for instance in the way of communicating; to the extent possible I think it is important not to put ourselves in a power position. I think… yeah, it could be in the way of behaving, the way of treating each other, not using it unnecessarily as a pressure, for instance. I mean, if you're having the money you could consciously use it in that negative way, because it is a power position. But you could use it as little as possible when it is not necessary. (27.10.05/NNGOho/int)

Being conscious of this power position carries also some responsibilities. According to a participant in a partnership seminar[17] who was representing the North, the Northern partners should be the first ones to take the 'risk' of trusting the Southern partners, because after all they have less to loose, only money. This comment reflects Freire's idea of the converts' faith in people.

6.3.3 Fostering elements

These elements contain the actions to avoid the dependence of the South on the North. This can be reflected in the kind of work the NGOs' project undertakes with the communities, as seen in the identification and cohesion elements, but in the fostering elements these actions refer to the mechanism set for the Southern partner not to depend upon the Northern. Freire refers to this approach as follows:

> True generosity consists precisely in fighting to destroy the causes which nourish false charity. False charity constraints the fearful and subdued, the 'rejects of life', to extend their trembling hands. True generosity lies in striving so that these hands –whether of individuals or whole peoples- need be extended less and less in supplication, so that more and more they become human hands which work, and working, transform the world" (Freire, 1970/1995:27).

In the phenomena of 'encouraging sustainability' and 'value of local knowledge' I described the different procedures that both organizations follow in order to prepare for a 'beyond aid scenario' that was referred to in chapter 2 (see section 2.3.10). The relational change strategy

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[16] This issue was made explicit in the seminar entitled "Partnership- A Mantra within development cooperation today." Held on April 25th, 2006 at the Norwegian School of Sports Sciences (NIH).
[17] *ibid.*

to prepare for the NNGO withdrawal is already undertaken by IntegrAndes, not waiting until the moment the foundation has retired. They do it when turning their look to local actors such as the municipalities and the community, in order to increase their participation in the projects, and thus substituting the funding that is now provided by the Foundation. This is, indeed, one of the Foundation's requirements.

The second strategy I referred to in chapter 2 is the internal reform. This implies the capacity that IntegrAndes builds in order to continue their mission even without the Foundation's funding. These measures are taken among other things, in accompaniment activities such as courses provided by the NNGO to help IntegrAndes to 'help themselves', which were referred to in the 'encouraging sustainability' phenomenon. Accompaniment is equivalent to what the literature calls 'institutional development' in section 2.3.7, which is the effort to support the local and national ownership and control over resources, constituting a path to sustainability. In an electronic mail subsequent to fieldwork, the IntegrAndes' accountant stated that they consider it as a responsibility of the funding institutions to support the Southern partners in their institutional development. Under this concept, he mentioned the training courses they receive, together with, for example, a two-month English course their executive director received to study in England with all expenses included. They also consider as institutional development the donation of material to facilitate their work, such as a computer and the acquisition of a digital camera. For them, an important part of this capacity building is the cultural exchanges they have with their funding institution, because this permits them to acquire experiences and learning about Norway in this case.

The IntegrAndes' accountant considers necessary that a part of the budget should be designated specifically to the institutional strengthening, "in order to be equipped and able to respond to unplanned situations and keep working when the external support finishes" (personal e-mail communication, March 3rd, 2006). In some aspects, this answers to my question about how the Foundation encourages IntegrAndes institutional development. The accountant's answer also corresponds with Postma's (1994:456) affirmation that "although these [supports] may be essential to the operation of the [S]NGO, in and of themselves they do not necessarily constitute institutional development" as it would be, for example, a support "explicitly directed towards strengthening the NGOs' management structure or the systems by which project outputs, outcomes and impacts are gauged".

In section 5.2.8 I talked about ownership and the value of local knowledge. I consider very constructive the NNGOs' attitude of trusting that local people know best their reality and have better elements to find the solutions than external agents; this reflects Freire's

concept of 'faith in people', that goes together with the liberating education that counters the banking concept of education. Nevertheless, what I consider even more important, is that IntegrAndes' staff themselves value their own work; their experience is not only a product of accompaniment, but also of their own capacities and effort. This fact increases the SNGO's self-esteem and thereafter their capacity of negotiating with their Northern partner.

This confidence in local knowledge, both of the SNGO and the communities is what contributes to increase the ownership of the project, because it is easier adapted to the local context and run by local actors. Helleiner (2000) understands local ownership as:

> …to involve the widest possible participation of those who are supposed to be the beneficiaries. The essence of ownership is that the recipients drive the process. They drive the planning, the design, the implementation, the monitoring, and the evaluation. Donors must narrow the gap between rhetoric and reality, and some have made tentative steps to do so (in Scandinavia, Holland and the UK). The attitude of recipients is clearly crucial as well. In a sense, ownership cannot be given—it has to be taken, it has to be seized, it has to be a willingness on the part of the local government to just plain 'do it', and at the appropriate points to just say 'no' (p.2)

I have already commented in the precondition elements that this partnership has still a way to go regarding the participation of the community in aspects like the evaluation. However, I think that taking in consideration the local actors in the planning and implementing of the project is an indicator of a good track. As a last comment for these fostering elements, I would like to point out a contrast between the literature that refers the Northern partners' pretext of lack of capacity in the South to take the steer of the projects, and this case. In the partnership between IntegrAndes and the Foundation the capacity is being built, followed by an accompaniment element, because the Foundation does not expect the SNGO to acquire the capacity automatically. This can be an example of liberating education in Freire's terms.

6.3.4 Autonomy and flexibility elements

In the phenomena of 'no imposition' and 'space of maneuver' I illustrated some of the efforts that the Foundation has made in order to maintain an open and horizontal communication with its Southern partners. These efforts conform a counterbalance to what Freire calls "prescription", in which the oppressors impose their choices and opinions upon the oppressed. As within libertarian education, the relationship between the Norwegian Foundation and IntegrAndes strives for using dialogue as their main way of communication. To this respect, Freire (1970/1995) says:

> Because dialogue is an encounter among women and men who name the world, it must not be a situation where some name on behalf of others. It is an act of creation; it must not serve as a crafty instrument for the domination of one person by another" (p.70).

As noted in section 5.2.6, an IntegrAndes staff member said that "there is dialogue, it is not that we're only receiving orders and executing them". I mentioned in the previous section that IntegrAndes' staff has acquired an increased self-esteem through the valuation of their own work, which serves as a backup for them, giving elements to increase their capacity to negotiate with their Northern partners and, in this way, moving from a 'dependent' to an 'active' status of the partnership in Lewis' (1998) terms (see section 2.3.6). In addition to this, their self-confidence is also a product of the long time that the partnership has lasted and the years the partners have had to know each other. It is with this background that the SNGO welcomes the collaboration of the NNGO, not their initiative; the "suggestions" made by the Foundation are formulated in a broad sense and then adapted to according to IntegrAndes' criteria, countering thus the mentioned prescription. Having this arena of interaction, dialogue takes a central role, mediating the interplay between IntegrAndes' space of action and the Foundation's need of control:

> Founding itself upon love, humility and faith, dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequence. It would be a contradiction in terms if dialogue –loving, humble and full of faith- did not produce this climate of mutual trust, which leads the dialoguers into even closer partnership in the naming of the world (Freire, 1970/1995:72).

As a concluding remark, I want to tell that during fieldwork, I was trying to explore how did IntegrAndes perceives the Foundation in terms of intrusiveness or authoritarianism. I asked them to tell me any proverb that reflected for them the kind of relationship they maintain. Influenced by the literature, I expected adages such as "where a captain commands, no sailor rules" or "the one who pays commands" or "don't complain about the teeth of a given horse"[18]. Surprisingly, I only got responses such as "today for us, tomorrow for them" and "help your brother to lift his charge, not to carry it".

6.3.5 Interaction mechanisms

The interaction mechanisms are intimately related to the kind of personal relationships that take place in this partnership. In section 2.3.9 I commented that the direct contact among partners has a decisive role in the way the relationship is constructed. I cited then a UNESCO report, which stressed the importance of the time dedicated by the partners to get to know each other, and the frequency of the contact in order to enhance communication. It was also stated that "the stronger the personal relationships, more social capital for co-operative problem-solving".

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[18] For the real formulation in Spanish: "Donde manda capitan no gobierna marinero", "el que paga manda" and "a caballo regalado no se le mira el diente"

In this case study, there is a very clear strategy of decentralization, discussed in section 5.2.12. This, among other things, is established in order to make the communication more fluid between the Northern and the southern partners. Instead of relating to a faraway office located in a foreign country, IntegrAndes staff can communicate directly with the staff located in Lima, speaking their language and with interlocutors that belong to their culture.

Together with this increased frequency of the contact and the easier access to the Northern partner, the decentralization strategy has another objective: make the relationship a more horizontal one. However, as some of the Foundation's staff has commented, and as I noticed myself, there are occasions in which "the Foundation in Norway" is perceived as a different entity to the "office in Lima", conferring to the former a higher status in the organizational structure even though it is not the case formally. It is here when the concept of authority appears in the relationship, and it is interesting to note that while in Norway they talk about flat structures and horizontality, the relationship is perceived from IntegrAndes' standpoint as naturally vertical, but not necessarily authoritarian.

As pointed out in the literature review, some of the power structures are created partly by people's identity, i.e. gender, class, nationality, as well as race (Crewe & Harrison, 1999:88). These components, considered a heritage of colonialism, were also commented by one of the Northern interviewees. I wondered whether this could be a Eurocentric vision, however, as Larrain (2000) notes:

> A cultural aspect, which has survived from colonial days, at times in a moderate form, at other times in an exacerbated form, is authoritarianism. This is a trend that persists in the political field, in the administration of public and private organizations, in family life and, in general, in Latin American culture, which concedes an extraordinary importance to the role of and respect for authority. Its origin is clearly related to three centuries of colonial life in which a strong Indo-Iberian cultural pole was constituted, which accentuated religious monopoly and political authoritarianism (p.195).

This could be one of the reasons why, for IntegrAndes' staff, the relationship with the Norwegian Foundation is naturally a vertical one, in spite of, or even due to the fact of dealing with a Regional Office, whose employees are urban and higher educated than them, who, in addition, share the same cultural inheritance.

Another reason for this perception of seeing Norwegians at the top of the structure could be the race and nationality,which according to Crewe and Harrison (1999) plays an important role in the identities of the partners who interact. I signalized in the 'balancing the unbalance' phenomenon (section 5.2.12) how IntegrAndes staff feels towards their Norwegian partners, that they differentiate them from the typical "gringo" who often exploits the Peruvian natural resources impoverishing their region. I also described how they perceive Norwegians as a solidarity people who contribute to their development. However,

Larrain (2000) makes also evident the existence of hidden racism in Latin America, as a part of its identity:

> Another important feature is masked racism. The existence of masked racism in Latin America is well documented even though it is a relatively neglected area of social science and generally it is not perceived as an important social problem. It is clear, though, that from very early days there has been in Latin America an exaggerated valuation of the 'whiteness' and a negative vision of Indians and blacks. For example, in the case of Peru, Flores Galindo has observed [that] in Peru no body would define himself or herself as a racist. Nevertheless, racial categories not only tinge but also sometimes condition our social perception. They are present in the make-up of professional groups, in the messages transmitted by the media or in terms of beauty contests. Racism exists notwithstanding the fact that racial terms are suppressed in the procedures of public identification and do not have official circulation. Yet a masked and even denied phenomenon does not cease to be real (p.197).

I am not saying that IntegrAndes' staff members, as Latin Americans and Peruvians, are the prototype of a racist person to the detriment of their own dignity. What I want to remark is that both authoritarianism and hidden racism are elements of the Latin American identity that play an unconscious role when they interact with authority figures or Western people.

These are cultural elements about which the Norwegian partner can do little, as little they can do with the structural differences that surround this partnership, as discussed earlier in this chapter. However, as with balancing efforts such as the decentralization strategy, there are ways to counter authoritarianism. Freire and Shor (1987) discuss this issue, in an educational setting, when talking about the differences between teachers and students.

> The question of authority in a dialogical classroom, whether the teacher is or is not equal to the students… is a very interesting question. The experience of *being under* leads the students to think that if you are a dialogical teacher you definitely deny the difference between you and them. All at once, all of us are equal! But, it is not possible… the dialogical relationship does not have the power to create such an impossible equality. The educator continue to be different from the students, but, and now for me this is the central question, the difference between them if the teacher is democratic, if his or her political dream is a *liberating* one, is that he or she cannot permit the necessary difference between the teacher and the students to become 'antagonistic'. The difference continues to exist! *I* am different from the students! But I cannot allow this to be antagonistic if I am democratic. If they become antagonistic, it is because I became authoritarian (p. 92-93).

This extract matches with the comment that a Foundation's staff member made, about not using their power position unnecessarily, not using their possession of the money as a pressure towards their Southern partners and thus reducing to the minimum possible the money influence. She commented also that their way of reducing the differences is reflected in their way of communicating and behaving. The Norwegian attitude during their visits to Peru is perceived as 'humble and simple', and this is an indicator that the Norwegian intent is fructifying. During fieldwork, I heard many times repeated the word "friendship" when one partner referred to the other. In the beginning, this concept raised to me a debate about what does friendship implies in terms of equality: to be friends means that we are the same? As a consequence of this analysis, I can conclude that friendship does not necessarily mean

equality, and in this case study the differences are recognized and balanced, this is how friendship is another factor that bounds the partners together.

6.4 Conclusion

In this discussion chapter I have made the links between the literature about partnership and the data found in the field. In the first section, I re-elaborated the concept of partnership taking as a base a model proposed by Padrón (1987), which I modified in order to illustrate the complexity of the case. I also defined this partnership as one pertaining to the 'visionary patronage' and 'collaborative operations' according to the typology of North-South collaboration presented by Elu and Banya (1999). In addition, I located the partnership of this case study in the "Partnership Development Continuum" elaborated by Mullinix (2002), resulting that this case is more correspondent to a 'partnership' stage, contrasted to a 'pre-partnership' or 'Partnership' phases, according to its characteristics on each one of the nine indicators proposed.

In the second part, I revisited the broader difficulties that the partners for development encounters, due to the asymmetry of the relationship, which I discussed in the literature review chapter. I stated then that one of the most significant characteristics of my case is the acknowledgement of the unbalance, and I decided then to centre the discussion on the mechanisms that are set up in order to counter the inequalities. In order to accomplish this task, I employed Freire's liberation theory as analytical support. Aided by this theory and other elements, I could then discuss in the third section the different elements I developed from the reorganizing of the phenomena presented in the findings chapter. Through all this process I discussed the way in which the partners construct this partnership together, understanding the complexities of their relation and the efforts the make to balance it.

In the next chapter I will make some final remarks that bound together all the components elaborated in this research process.

7. Final remarks

Since the beginning of this study, I was aware that posing the question of whether a true partnership is possible could not have a definite answer. Rather, as I pointed out in several occasions, whether a partnership is "genuine" and goes beyond rhetoric or not is a matter of degree, and the nuances that each case presents give the richness to the possible answers to this question.

It is important to remember that this is a case study, anchored in a specific place and time, which provides a broad description of the situation in this concrete partnership with these concrete informants. In addition, I have to say that early in the process of conducting this study I was aware of the risk of providing a "pink picture" of the case; this lead me to a posture of being meticulous in the categorization and the rest of the analysis process, in order "tie" consistently all the conclusions I arrived to. I am in the hope of having provided a trustworthy account of how this relation is experienced and constructed by its actors.

From the literature review, I learned that the models of a true partnership are so: ideals, not attainable in an absolute form. This means that my task at a certain point evolved from determining whether this case is a true partnership or not, to explore the elements that make it function in a more or less constructive way. For this reason, it would be contradictory if I made in this final chapter a statement of the nature: "I conclude that the partnership between IntegrAndes and the Norwegian Foundation is a true one". However, I can say that after the research process I learned that a well functioning partnership is possible despite the structural asymmetry surrounding it, as long as the inequalities are acknowledged and challenged. In this case, I can identify some factors that make this partnership state more in the positive side of the "rhetorical-genuine" continuum. These are:

- The (Christian) values that are shared by the partners, not imposed by one upon the other.
- The long time that the partners of this case have had to know each other, permitting a fluid communication and increasing the self-security of the Southern partners to negotiate.
- The genuine valuation of the local knowledge, not only by the Northern partner, but by the Southern partners themselves.
- The commitment of both organizations to their mission.
- The weight put on the respect of agreements.

- The middle term planning that enhances responsibility and commitment.
- The small size of both organizations, that facilitates communication.

In spite of these positive features, not everything is perfect. Even tough the goal of this study is not completely evaluative, I identified some areas of improvement, such as the real inclusion of the beneficiaries in all the aspects of the projects.

There is another important factor that might be determinant in the development of the relationship. This is the rarity of the relation Norway-Peru as described in chapter 3, which is complemented by the feeling of being different that the participants expressed. Part of this rarity is the fact that Norway does not have Peru as a priority in its ODA expenses, and Peru does not have Norway as one of its main donors. However, as a case study, this research provides little elements to portray the case as an exception. It would be therefore interesting to compare this case to another in which factors such as the origin of the NNGO is different. This would add new elements, as for example, the colonial past that Peru sustains with Spain. Still, the further utilization of this piece of research is up to future users, getting with it useful elements to understand similar cases.

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Appendix A: OECD statistics about Norway, Peru and Latin America
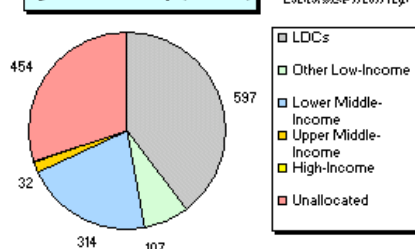
1. Norway as ODA donor

NORWAY

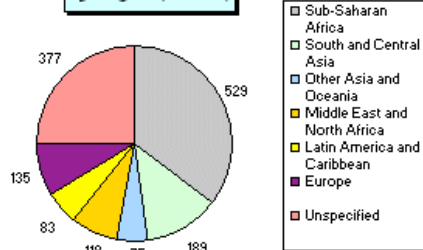*Gross Bilateral ODA, 2003-04 average, unless otherwise shown*

Net ODA	2003	2004	Change 2003/04
Current (USD m)	2 042	2 199	7.7%
Constant (2003 USD m)	2 042	1 982	-3.0%
In Norwegian Kroner (million)	14 457	14 817	2.5%
ODA/GNI	0.92%	0.87%	
Bilateral share	72%	70%	
Net Official Aid (OA)			
Current (USD m)	50	45	-10.2%

Top Ten Recipients of gross ODA/OA (USD million)

1	Afghanistan	68
2	Tanzania	63
3	Mozambique	58
4	Palestinian Adm. Areas	54
5	Sudan	45
6	Serbia & Montenegro	40
7	Uganda	40
8	Iraq	39
9	Somalia	37
10	Zambia	36

By Income Group (USD m) — *Clockwise from top*: 454, 597, 32, 314, 107
- LDCs
- Other Low-Income
- Lower Middle-Income
- Upper Middle-Income
- High-Income
- Unallocated

By Region (USD m): 377, 529, 135, 83, 118, 75, 189
- Sub-Saharan Africa
- South and Central Asia
- Other Asia and Oceania
- Middle East and North Africa
- Latin America and Caribbean
- Europe
- Unspecified

By Sector
- Education, Health & Population
- Other Social Infrastructure
- Economic Infrastucture
- Production
- Multisector
- Programme Assistance
- Debt Relief
- Emergency Aid
- Unspecified

Source: OECD, DAC.
http://www.oecd.org/dac

Source OECD(2004a)
Available online at: http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/42/48/1860517.gif

2. Top Ten Recipients and Donors to Latin America

Table 2: Top 10 Donors in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2003
10 premiers donneurs en Amérique latine et dans les Caraïbes, 2003

		Latin Am. & the Car.	All Aid Recipients	% All Donors (a)	% Total Donor (b)			Latin Am. & the Car.	All Aid Recipients	% Total Donor (b)	% All Donors (a)
		USD million						USD million			
1	United States	1817	15995	29%	11%	1	IDB Sp.Fund	292	292	100%	5%
2	EC	554	9614	9%	6%	2	CarDB	19	19	100%	0%
3	Spain	517	1157	8%	45%	3	Spain	517	1157	45%	8%
4	Germany	473	4445	8%	11%	4	GEF	32	138	23%	1%
5	Japan	464	6036	7%	8%	5	Nordic Dev.Fund	12	52	23%	0%
6	IDA	307	5270	5%	6%	6	Luxembourg	24	153	15%	0%
7	Netherlands	292	3099	5%	9%	7	UNTA	70	518	13%	1%
8	IDB Sp.Fund	292	292	5%	100%	8	Czech Republic	11	84	13%	0%
9	France	213	6643	3%	3%	9	Canada	176	1450	12%	3%
10	Canada	176	1450	3%	12%	10	UNFPA	32	273	12%	1%
	Other	1140	23452	18%	5%		Other	5061	73318	7%	81%
	Total	6246	77453	100%	8%		Total	6246	77453	8%	100%

(a): Aid from each donor to countries in Latin America and the Caribbean as percent of aid from all donors to countries in Latin America and the Caribbean / Aide de chaque donneur aux pays d'Amérique latine et des Caraïbes en pourcentage de l'aide de l'ensemble des donneurs aux pays d'Amérique latine et des Caraïbes (1817 / 6246 = 29% ; 292 / 6246 = 5%).

(b): Aid from each donor to countries in Latin America and the Caribbean as percent of aid from each donor to all aid recipients / Aide de chaque donneur aux pays d'Amérique latine et des Caraïbes en pourcentage de l'aide de chaque donneur à l'ensemble des bénéficiaires d'aide (1817 / 15995 = 11% ; 292 / 292 = 100%).

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Table 3: Top 10 recipients in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2003 10 premiers receveurs en Amérique Latine et dans les Caraïbes, 2003		USD million	% All Lat. Am. & the Carib. countries
1	Bolivia	930	15%
2	Nicaragua	833	13%
3	Colombia	802	13%
4	Peru	500	8%
5	Honduras	389	6%
6	Brazil	296	5%
7	Guatemala	247	4%
8	Haiti	200	3%
9	El Salvador	192	3%
10	Ecuador	176	3%
	Latin America and the Caribbean, other	1681	27%
	Total	**6246**	**100%**

Source: OECD (2004c) Available online at
http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/39/50/7504885.PDF

3. Peru as ODA recipient

Peru

Receipts	2002	2003	2004
Net ODA (USD million)	496	500	487
Bilateral share (gross ODA)	93%	90%	94%
Net ODA / GNI	0.9%	0.9%	0.7%
Net Private flows (USD million)	688	670	143

For reference	2002	2003	2004
Population (million)	26.7	27.1	27.5
GNI per capita (Atlas USD)	2 020	2 140	2 360

Top Ten Donors of gross ODA (2003-04 average)		(USD m)
1	United States	217
2	Japan	169
3	Germany	63
4	Spain	52
5	EC	28
6	Netherlands	22
7	Switzerland	18
8	France	15
9	Canada	13
10	Belgium	9

Bilateral ODA by Sector (2003-04)

- Education
- Economic Infrastructure & Services
- Programme Assistance
- Other & Unallocated/Unspecified
- Health & Population
- Production
- Action relating to Debt
- Other social sectors
- Multisector
- Emergency Assistance
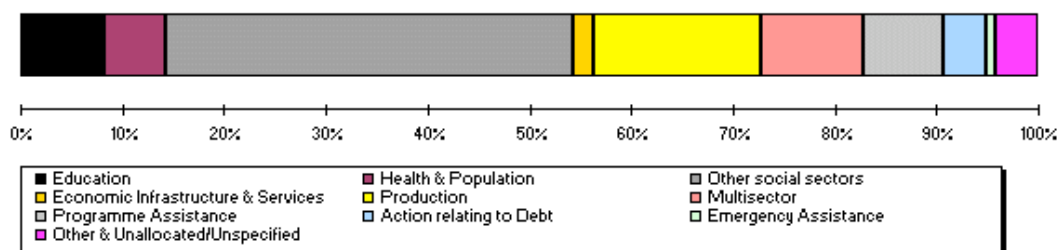
Sources: OECD, World Bank.

Source: OECD, (2004e)
http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/23/42/1882858.gif

4. International NGOs registered in Peru in 2005

International NGOs registered in Peru in 2005
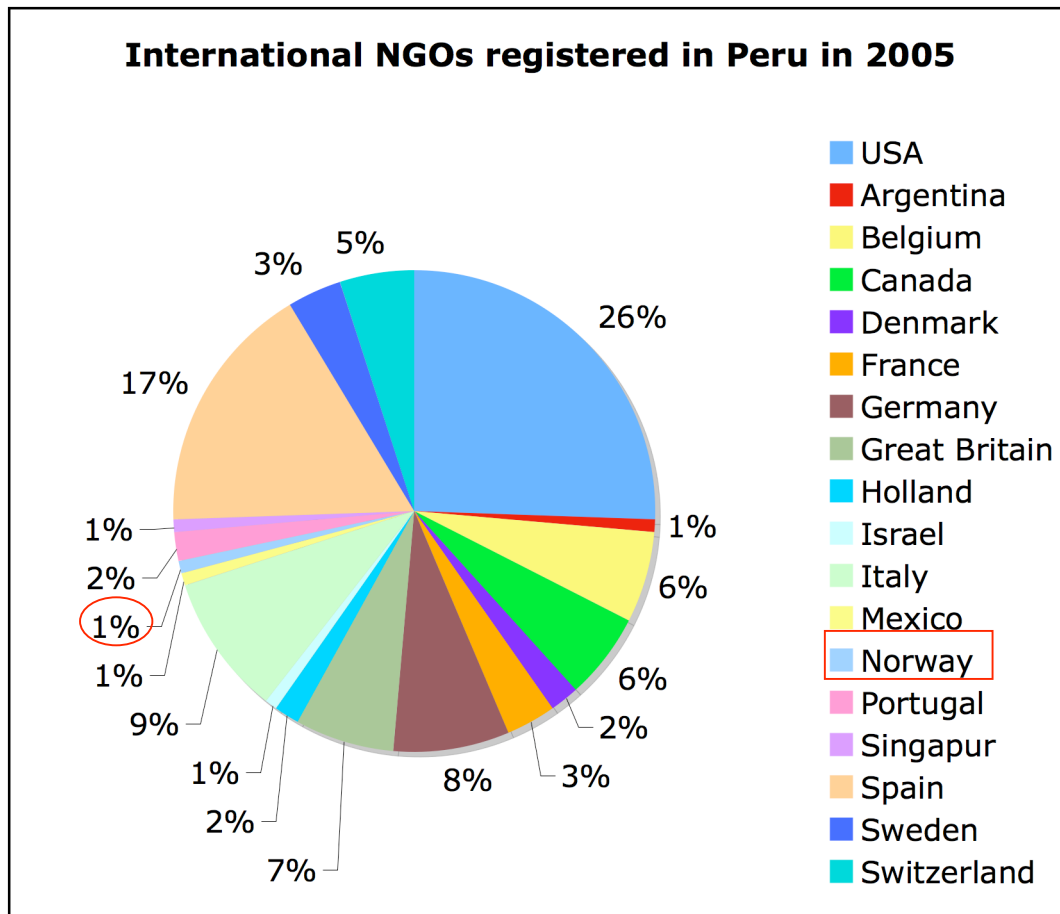
Source: APCI (2005)

This graphic is elaborated after the list of foreign non-profit organizations registered as running projects in Peru in 2005, provided by the Peruvian Agency of International Cooperation during my fieldwork in September 2005.

Appendix B: Fieldwork cards

Informant	Donor organization with local employees
Setting	Regional Office in Lima
Informants	Regional director, information secretary, accountant
Method/ Justification	Interview that allows them express their points of view. The interview is In this case adequate due the limited amount of time. The participatory observation is not employed

Kind of information	- About the concept partnership
	    o What is the term used to refer to this collaboration between North and South?
	    o What does it mean to them?
	    o What do they think a genuine partnership should be like?
	    o What are the characteristics of a true partnership?
	    o Is it unidirectional? Is it a two ways road?
	
	- About their role in the partnership
	    o How do you denominate your self in this relationship?
	    o How is it to be "in the middle" between the foreign donor and the local recipient
	    o Their feelings about working "for Norway" in Peru's benefit
	    o What is your opinion of Norway in general as a donor?
	    o How do you think you are perceived as a donor?
	    o What are they supposed to give in the relationship?
	    o what they actually give and what they receive
	
	- Their expectations:
	    o How a potential partner should be?
	    o What are you supposed to receive from your partners?
	    o What do you expect from your partners?
	    o How do they perceive the role of their counterparts (active/passive)
	
	- Their relationship with the partner:
	    o How are the relationships established?
	    o How do they choose their counterparts
	    o How do you think you are perceived by your counterparts? Specialy by CoDe?
	    o What are the characteristics of CoDe as a partner?
	    o What are the most common difficulties you have with your partner?
	- About negotiation processes:
	    o who decides what?
	    o How they prioritize needs
	
	- Issues of power
	    o Do they perceive any unbalance?
	    o If so, do they acknowledge it openly?
	    o How they balance the power relationships
	
	- Issues of dependence and ownership
	    o Are there any ways in which you do something to enhance the self-reliability of you counterpart?
	- Final general appreciation: would you say your partnership with CoDe has all the characteristics of a true partnership you mention as ideal?

Informant	Local NGO as aid recipient
Setting	SNGO's working setting
Informant	The work team
Method/ Justification	Semi-structured Interview: permits a first hand information about personal perceptions of them as a partner in the relationship Participatory observation: as a complement to the interview, the observation of the actual behavior of the organization in relation to the partner permits the comparison between what they say and what they do. The observation allows the researcher access to information that are not explicit in the interviews. In addition, the period of time of the research observation matches with the period of preparation the arrive of Norwegian volunteers Focus group: permits the interaction of the members when reflecting about their role as a group in the partnership. The group discussion and interaction would allow some members to reflect about aspects that otherwise wouldn't
Kind of information	Basic concepts: • What term do you use for denominate the relationship with the Foundation? • What is the term for denominate yourself in the relationship? • What is the term for denominating your counterpart? Define the concept partnership • What does this "partnership" mean for you? • What are the important aspects of the partnership? (Criteria of a genuine partnership) • What are the functions of each partner? • What are you expected to do/give/receive? • What is your counterpart expected to do/give/receive? • What is the concrete partners' collaboration in the projects? About the fact of receiving and being a partner of the Foundation • What is "aid" mean for you? • *What gives the partnership besides the money? • How the aid reception takes place? Do they just ask for it? Have to compete for it? Do they get everything they want? • How do you perceive the help? • What meaning do they put in the fact of receiving? • Needs tailoring: Is there any way to make it more likely to receive the aid? • How is it perceived to be a partner with Norway? (from outside the organization: questions of prestige, status) • How did the relationship start? Who chose whom? • Do you know how the foundation chooses its counterparts? Questions of the direct relationship • What are the most common conflicts between the partners? • What happens when there is a mismatch between desires, plans, and strategies? • "How much" space of action do they have? Issues of dependence: • What would happen to the project without the external funding? • Do they have alternatives? Plans B? Do they feel self-reliant? • What strategies of getting support? Issues of ownership: • Who decides what the aid is going to be used in? General valuation • Does your relationship have the criteria you mentioned as

	necessary?
In the focus group with the staff	• What does the word partnership bring to your minds? • What would be the ideal characteristics of a partnership? • What do you expect from the partnership? • Do you get what you expect? • What is expected from you? • What image do you have of the donor? • What do you believe are the reasons of the Foundation to help? • What do you get apart from the financial support? • Is there any kind of conditionality to get the support? • How much decision power does the organization have? Over what? • Have there been disagreements about interests, goals, and methods? • What happens when there are disagreements with the partner? • Do you feel it's a balanced relationship? • What would happen to the project without this donor's support? • Do you have any other partnership with a foreign donor?

Informant	Key informants related to the partnership
Setting	Lima
Informant	Former regional director[*]
Method/ Justification	Interview: justified by the short period of time available and the pertinence of the instrument for capture the person's knowledge and perceptions of the relationship as an external agent
Kind of information	Some general data for setting the context - What was his function in the Foundation? - The period of his function About the term partnership - What is the term used to refer to this collaboration between North and South? - What is this collaboration about? - Who does what? - Which term would you use to designate Peru in this collaboration? - Which term would you use to designate Norway in this collaboration? - Which are, in your perspective, the characteristics of a true partnership? About the beginning of the partnership - How did the partnership IntegrAndes/Foundation started? - Why? When? What was the international context, the discourse behind? - What were the "requirements" for establishing the partnership? - What did each partner was committed to do? About the evolution of the partnership - Did you notice any change in the relationship? - How has the relationship evolved? - Did the rhetoric behind the partnership changed? In which sense? - Did you notice any change in the attitudes of the partners? In which sense? - Did the "terms" changed? (e.g. from donor-recipient to partners, from charity to equal collaboration) About the donor

[*] This informant happened to run his own NGO, which sustained a partnership with the Foundation. Thus, I decided to ask him questions also as a counterpart of the NNGO

	- What about Norway as partner?
	- Which term would you use to designate Peru in this collaboration?
	- What is the help that Norway gives about? (money, capacity building, training)
	- What do you see as Norwegian motivations for helping?
	- What do you think Norway gets when helping?
	- What do they think is the intention of the donor when giving?
	- Do you think Norway is different from other donors?
	About the recipient
	- Which is the term used to designate IntegrAndes in this relationship?
	- What is IntegrAndes receiving in this relationship?
	- What is IntegrAndes **giving** in this relationship?
	- How do you think that IntegrAndes perceives the help?
	- How do you think that IntegrAndes perceives itself as a recipient?
	- Do you note any dependency from IntegrAndes?
	About the partnership viewed from outside
	- Would you say that you see the characteristics of the true partnership in this relationship between The Foundation and IntegrAndes?
	- Do you notice any unbalance in the relationship?
	- Have any of the partners more power than the other?

Informant	Grassroots, the ultimate recipients of the aid sent by the donor
Setting	The communities where the projects are run
Informant	Teachers, local authorities, parents and children
Method/ Justification	Participant observation Informal interview:
Kind of information	Knowledge about the partnership Satisfaction with the results Perceptions about the donor Ways of getting resources for their plans (skills, financial, training) Reciprocity of the relationship with the donor at their local level Any conditionality to receive aid?

Informant	Documental information
Setting	Lima
Informant	DESCO Centro de Estudios y Promocion del Desarrollo Jr. Leon de la Fuente 110, Lima 17. www.desco.org.pe tlf: (511) 613 8300 postmaster@desco.org.pe http://www.desco.org.pe/ ANC (Asociación Nacional de Centros de Investigación, Promoción Social y Desarrollo): Prolg. Gnral. Arenales 279 - San Isidro Lima 27 - PERÙ Telef (511) 4411063. http://www.anc.org.pe/ CEPES-ALOP (Centro Peruano de Estudios Sociales) Av. Salaverry 818, Jesús María, Lima 11 - **Perú** Telf. (51)14-336610 / Fax. (51)14-331744 E-mail: **cepes@cepes**.org.pe Página Web: www.**cepes**.org.pe APCI (Agencia Peruana de Cooperación Internacional): Av. José Pardo 261. Miraflores. Lima 18, Peru
Kind of information	Background of Peru as aid recipient Some figures, statistics about aid income and the main donors Information about the main Peruvian sectors benefiting from aid Information about the Peruvian NGO sector

Informant	Donor organization
Setting	Head office in Norway
Informant	People in the organization that is directly involved with the partners and the educational projects and Latin America
Method/ Justification	Interview that allows them express their points of view. The interview is in this case adequate due the limited amount of time. The participatory observation is not employed
Kind of information	Broad topics: ▪ Definitions of basic terms like "partnership" ▪ Reasons for having partners ▪ Perception of their partner ▪ Own perception as a donor ▪ Processes of the partnership ▪ Power position as the owner of the resources? Are they aware of it? Is this power unbalance acknowledged? How is it dealt with? ▪ In which ways do they enhance the self-reliance of your partners? ▪ Tied aid? Values imposition? ▪ Protection of their interests, control
	Possible questions: - How do you experience the act of helping? - What does Partnership mean for you? - What does Partnership mean for the Foundation? - What do you expect from this partnership? - How do you experience the act of helping? - What is your motivation (or the Foundation's) for being part of this partnership? - What is your contribution in this partnership? - What does the Foundation gives apart from money? What is the role of the Foundation in the activities of the Southern Local NGOs? - What do you (or the Foundation) get from this partnership? - How do you think the partners in the "South" perceive the partnership? - Do you think you fill their expectations? - Antecedents of just "nominal" partnerships where the donor decides, and protects its interests… Is Norway different? Why? Do you feel that Peruvians "tailor" their needs? - How do you think you are perceived as a donor? - About tying help (what does an organization has to do, or how do they get to be a partner with you? - Do you thing your org is special in some way in respect to its partnership relationships? - * What does each partner do? - * What does each get? - The nature of the relationship when one has and the other receives - What does the Foundation get from all of this? - Are there any kinds of rules to give the aid? - Do you perceive any kind of need tailoring? - The fact of not having Norwegian employees implies autonomy? - Some information about how the relationships with their partners have evolved through the time

Appendix C: Letter of consent

Carta de consentimiento

Yo, el/ la abajo suscrit@, he aceptado participar en el grupo focal / entrevista con Nina Meza, con el propósito de recolectar información para su tesis de maestría.

Entiendo que las respuestas serán tratadas confidencialmente. Ningún nombre o rasgo individual que identifique a los informantes será agregado a ninguna cita textual reproducida en el reporte escrito.

La entrevista será audio grabada con el único propósito de garantizar precisión. Las únicas personas que tendrán acceso a estos datos serán la investigadora y su asesor académico.

También entiendo que tengo el derecho de dar por terminada mi participación en cualquier momento.

_____ _____
Firma   Lugar y Fecha

Appendix D: Guide for interview's references

Abbreviation	Meaning	Function	Code
NNGO	Northern Non Governmental Organization		
NNGOro1	Staff member	Regional director	(1.9.05/NNGOro1/int)
NNGOro2	Staff member	Information chief	(1.9.05/NNGOro2/int) (29.9.05/NNGOro2/int)
NNGOro3	Staff member	Accountant	(29.9.05/NNGOro3/int)
NNGOho	Staff member	Head office	(27.10.05/NNGOho/int)
SNGO	Southern Non Governmental Organization		
SNGOsm1	Staff member	Project coordinator	(27.9.05/SNGOsm1/int)
SNGOsm2	Staff member	Accountant	(10.9.05/SNGOsm2/int)
SNGOsm3	Staff member	Project assistant	
SNGOsm4	Staff member	Project assistant	
SNGOsm5		Secretary	
SNGOsm6		Driver	
SNGOsf			(12.9.05/SNGOsf/fg)
SNGOP	Southern Non Governmental Organization Partner		
SNGOp1		Partner organization	(31.8.05/SNGOp1/int)
SNGOp2		Educational authority	
SNGOp3		Official link with the Ministry of Education	(21.9.05/SNGOp3/int)
SNGOp4			(27.9.05/SNGOp4/int)
GRP	Grassroots participant		