Building Effective Partnerships

The best starting point for school partnerships is when schools are clear about their reasons for partnering and have at least some compatible objectives. Partnerships do not develop in simple, linear, formulaic ways. They are all different. For example, while some very new partnerships are able to describe their relationship as open and trusting with equal commitment, others who have worked together for years, are still working towards achieving this.

Partnership Rules - in a Nutshell:
- Be clear about your objectives and know why you are partnering.
- Be patient and let the goals evolve.
- Invest in establishing good working relationships.
- Build on each others' strengths.
- Develop trust by being open, transparent and honest.
- Be clear about each partner's roles and responsibilities.
- Communicate openly and be prepared to resolve differences as they arise.
- Be flexible and listen.
- Expect significant benefits to take time.

Partnership journey

This is how teachers in Cumbria and Somerset (UK) described the different stages of their partnerships with schools in African, Asian, Latin American and Caribbean countries:

Early-stage partnerships

value-shaking, challenging, active, diverse, successful, exciting, equal, embryonic, opportunities, building links, tentative, frustrating, potentially fantastic, slow, exploding stereotypes, developing, lack of practical senior leadership team support, feverish, unstructured, exciting, keen, difficult communications, commitment, time limitations, youthful, needing enthusiastic link person, need individual contact, continues to be renewed – staff changes, innovative, joint desire to develop links, emerging, (working towards) shared goals.

Established partnerships

whole school, inspirational, exciting, mutual commitment for growth, harmonious, shared values, shared aims and goals, involving wider community, trusting, mutual respect, informative, supportive, understanding cultural differences, collaborative, warm, inclusive, friendship, rewarding, enthusiastic, long term, global, life-changing, vibrant, project-based, committed, strong, direct educational curricular experience, building for the future, reciprocal, fulfilling, management support, reflecting.

Based on an idea from teachers at a DGSP workshop in India

Is your partnership young or established?
How would you describe your partnership?

Global school partnership stages

Preparatory stages

- Explore and clarify your motives for partnership.
- Explore the potential value of a long term, learning partnership for your school – how might it contribute to whole school policies, teaching and learning, and learners' attainment and achievement?
- Establish the level of interest and consensus among colleagues – ensure that there is support from senior management, including the head teacher.
- Set up a partnership committee and write an action plan. Identify potential support from local communities and other organisations.
- Carry out a global curriculum audit to find out what's already happening in your school.
- Prepare a brief outlining the sort of partnership you wish to have – this will help make a good match and get you off to the best start. A broad and flexible brief is most likely to generate interest from potential partners.

Early stages

- You have now found a school interested in forming a learning partnership with you. Communications may not yet be reliable but you are trying to explore the potential for the partnership.
- Begin discussions on a draft partnership agreement.
- Curricular audits take place in both schools and the potential for joint curricular work is identified.
- Undertake small, short-term learner projects in both schools to generate and maintain interest.
- Identify the external support that is most useful for your partnership and take full advantage of it.
- Ideally, the first teacher visits take place, in both directions, towards the end of this stage.
- During visits more reliable means of communication are identified, the emerging partnership agreement is discussed, members of the partnership committee meet.

Established stages

- A partnership agreement has been signed by both schools.
- Joint curricular work starts and more subjects and stages are incorporated.
- The partnership is (becoming) an integral part of school life – more staff are involved in reciprocal visits.
- Joint curricular work happens and learners actively contribute to partnership development, e.g. through school councils or partnership committees.
- In secondary schools exchange visits between learners may take place.
- Local communities in both places are actively involved.
- A good network of external support has been established.
- The partnership agreement continues to be evaluated and further refined.
- You regularly share your partnership experience with others.
- The partnership has the capacity to continue despite staff changes and the loss of particular funding sources – it has become sustainable.

Partnerships typically tend to evolve through stages:
- **they form**
- **they frustrate**
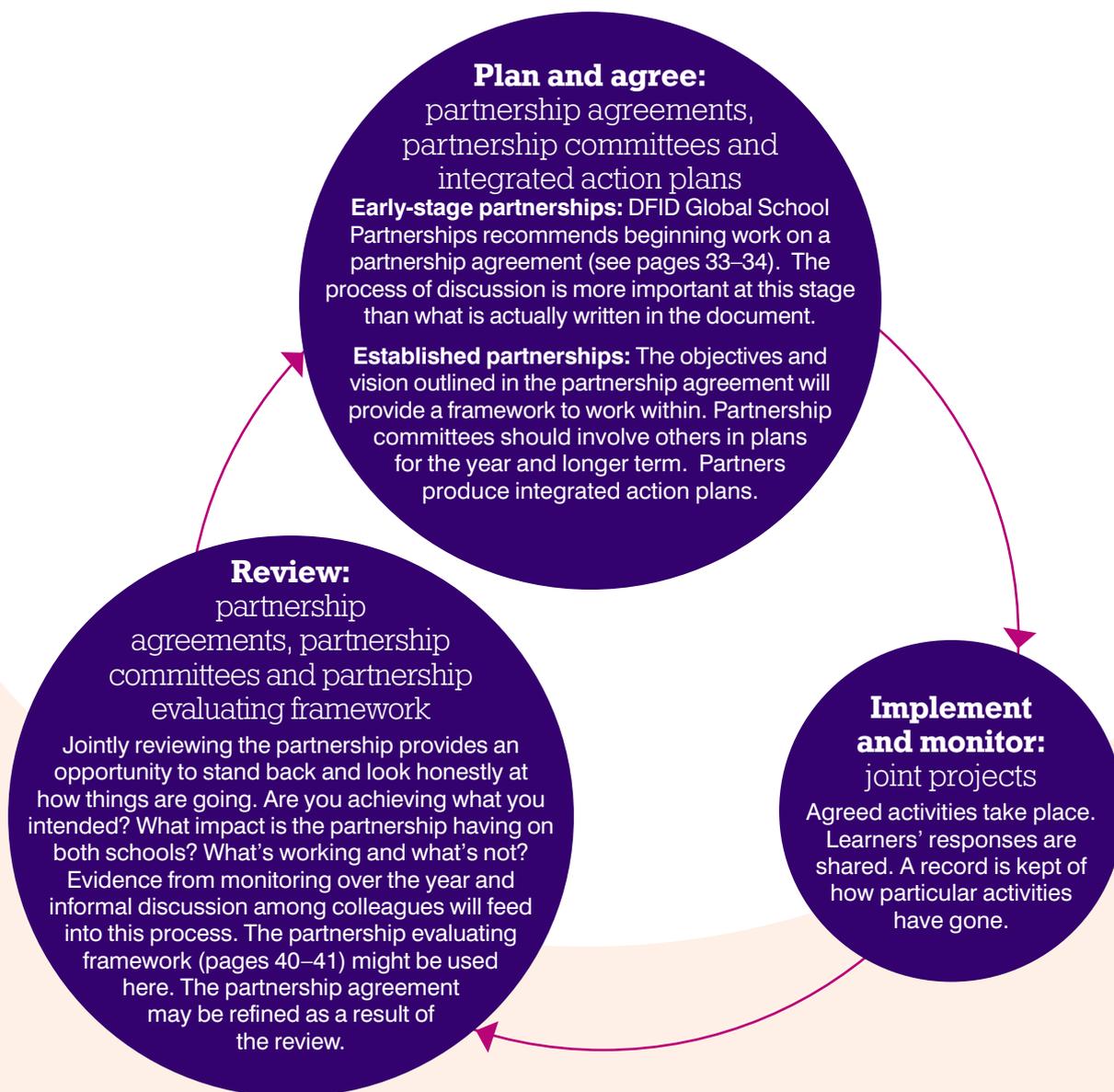- **they function**
- **they may fly or they may fail**

From: Partnerships Online (www.partnerships.org.uk)

> **?** Compare this idealised view of partnership development with your own experience.

Partnership cycle

Once schools have agreed to form a partnership they begin the cyclical process of jointly planning, implementing and reviewing the effectiveness and progress of the partnership.

Plan and agree:
partnership agreements, partnership committees and integrated action plans

Early-stage partnerships: DFID Global School Partnerships recommends beginning work on a partnership agreement (see pages 33–34). The process of discussion is more important at this stage than what is actually written in the document.

Established partnerships: The objectives and vision outlined in the partnership agreement will provide a framework to work within. Partnership committees should involve others in plans for the year and longer term. Partners produce integrated action plans.

Implement and monitor:
joint projects

Agreed activities take place. Learners' responses are shared. A record is kept of how particular activities have gone.

Review:
partnership agreements, partnership committees and partnership evaluating framework

Jointly reviewing the partnership provides an opportunity to stand back and look honestly at how things are going. Are you achieving what you intended? What impact is the partnership having on both schools? What's working and what's not? Evidence from monitoring over the year and informal discussion among colleagues will feed into this process. The partnership evaluating framework (pages 40–41) might be used here. The partnership agreement may be refined as a result of the review.

Some of the steps in learning partnership development and management.

? What sort of planning, implementing and reviewing activities happen in your partnership? How might you improve these?

Preparing for partnership

why?

where?

who?

how?

Motivation

Why might a global school partnership be good for our school?

What might we achieve reasonably quickly in practical terms?

What more ambitious, visionary goals could we aim for in the longer term?

Are we partly motivated by wanting to help a poorly resourced school or by receiving resources from a better resourced school? How might this affect our relationship and teaching and learning?

Vision

A vision describes what you want to see in place some years down the road. It is a picture of how you would like the future to be.

Teaching and learning

How might teaching and learning benefit? How can we be sure that these benefits are mutual?

How will a partnership enhance the goals of our school and complement school development plans?

Are we sure that learning will happen in mutually respectful and equal ways? Can we learn together or will learning be mainly in one direction? Will learning challenge or reinforce stereotypes?

Participation

How can we involve as many colleagues as possible from the early stages?

How might learners contribute to an evolving partnership relationship? Will all learners have the opportunity to be involved or only a selected group?

What opportunities exist in our local communities? Are there existing partnerships that we could join or learn from? Should we be considering a cluster partnership with other local schools?

Have we the support of senior staff and managers in our school? How can we get them on board?

Charitable fundraising

Often when well-resourced schools partner with schools that have few resources, immediate thoughts turn to giving and receiving resources. If a partnership begins with one side giving and the other side receiving then it can be difficult to move on towards an equitable relationship with learning as the primary goal. It can also reinforce overly negative and positive stereotypes (see page 53).

Resourcing

Do we have the capacity to enter a partnership at this time? Will it stretch us too far?

Are we aware of existing communication options, e.g. mobile phones, internet cafés, using a third person or organisation, postal services? Can we find ways of beginning communication without incurring significant costs? Can minimal costs, such as postage of small packages be covered?

Have we identified sources of support and expertise in our local communities and beyond?

Partner schools

Where in the world might we look for a partner? What are the options and the advantages and disadvantages of each? Would it be more appropriate to partner with a school closer to home, e.g. within your own country?

What might the expectations and motivations of our potential partner be? Why would they want to partner with us?

Do potential partner countries have historical and current connections, e.g. slavery, colonisation, migration or trade, which affect learners' views? Will these help or hinder mutual learning?

? Get together as many colleagues as possible to discuss these questions. Finish off by deciding whether to go ahead with a global school partnership or not.

What's already happening?

- Conduct audits of existing global dimension activity within your school and how it can be developed further across the curriculum (see pages 15, 59–94 and the web links below).
- Do an audit of the skills and experience among staff in terms of the global dimension, diversity awareness and equitable and inclusive working practices (see page 52). Identify professional development needs and find support for these.
- Do preparatory work with learners, e.g. about slavery, colonisation, independence, globalisation and development; motives for partnership; school council involvement; perceptions of themselves and others.
- Check the DFID Global School Partnerships website (www.britishcouncil.org/globalschools) for advice and guidance and for other organisations offering support.
- In the UK contact your local Development Education Centre (DEC) for advice, resources and training opportunities to help develop a global dimension in UK curricula (see pages 101–103) for contact details of your nearest DEC). You may be fortunate to have a local DEC which has experience of school partnerships.

- In Southern countries, contact DFID Global School Partnerships (www.britishcouncil.org.uk/globalschools).
- Contact your education authority or ministry to find out what other global partnerships and links are already in place. Do you want to fit into existing schemes or start something new?
- Contact community groups such as faith, diaspora, trade union, black and minority ethnic, women's and community education groups – who may have established relationships with communities in other parts of the world. The UK One World Linking Association may be able to help you with this (www.ukowla.org.uk).
- In the UK check the Global Educators Register (www.britishcouncil.org/globalschools) of professionals with international experience for advice and guidance.
- Why not invite a school that has the sort of partnership that you are interested in to talk to you about their experience? Your education authority, ministry or DFID Global School Partnerships co-ordinator may be able to help you with this.

'[we are looking for]… a style of linking that puts the relationship between partners at the centre, built on continued dialogue and reflective practice. We have many devices that we regularly use to receive information about the unknown 'other', such as books, film, and the Internet. This is a one-way street. You are now considering beginning a relationship and becoming involved with real people in real places to understand the 'other' and ourselves. This brings responsibilities and obligations for both parties and is a significant undertaking.'

A Good Practice Guide to Whole School Linking, MUNDI Global Education Centre

---

Find out what's already happening in your school and how a partnership might complement this. Draw up an action plan with allocated tasks. Plan a follow-up meeting to report on progress.

Web links
For examples of global dimension audits
Developing Citizenship: **www.developingcitizenship.org.uk/wsd_audit.htm**
Global Dimension: **www.globaldimension.org.uk**
Oxfam: **www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/teachers/globciti/wholeschool/getstarted.htm**
RISC: **www.risc.org.uk**
Yorkshire and Humber Global Schools Association: **www.yhgsa.org.uk/benchmarks.htm**

How global is your school?

For each of the headings below give your school a rating to indicate:

✓✓ Yes, we are very good at this

✓ Yes, we are good at this, but room for improvement

✗ No, we are not good at this

Learning materials

Do materials highlight similarities between people – or do they emphasise differences?

Are connections made between local and global issues?

Is diversity locally, regionally and globally celebrated?

Do materials challenge us to ask why the world is as it is and suggest how it might be different?

How global are the materials we use?

Curriculum

Does the curriculum:
- explore global dimension themes (social justice and equity, diversity, globalisation and interdependence, sustainable development, peace and conflict)?
- develop negotiation skills and critical and independent thinking?
- encourage open-mindedness, i.e. considering the views of others and being prepared to change your ideas?
- explore uncertainty and ambiguity?
- encourage long-term thinking?

Are connections made between learning in different subjects and stages?

How global is our curriculum?

Ethos

Is there a belief in the school that individually and collectively we can make a difference?

Are recycling, waste reduction, energy saving, ethical purchasing and sustainable development (including school farms and gardens) practices firmly in place?

Are staff, learners, parents and local communities included in discussions and decisions about what's happening in the school?

Are there additional opportunities for learners to explore global dimension concerns through community-based and extra-curricular activities?

Are there effective and fair ways of dealing with behaviour issues?

Is the school welcoming to visitors?

Are learners and staff valued and treated fairly?

Are there active links between the school, parents and a range of local communities?

How global is our ethos?

Improvements:

If there is room for improvement, identify practical ideas.

Adapted with permission from *The global dimension in primary/secondary schools*, RISC (www.risc.org.uk)

Changing perceptions

> ? Consider the perceptions, recorded below, of Kenyan teachers and Mexican learners about the UK. How did their perceptions change once they were involved in partnerships? Do your classes share some of these perceptions? If learners' perceptions of potential partners are overly positive or negative discuss how this might affect the partnership.

Kenyan teachers attending a DFID Global School Partnership Conference

Not yet involved in partnerships	**Involved in partnerships, including some who have participated in visits**
• very cold weather, cloudy, a lot of snow • unfriendly people – too rich, too busy • no villages, no agriculture, highly industrialised • very developed infrastructure – no pot holes, everybody owns a car • high literacy levels • developed schools • well equipped schools • teachers are well paid • pupils very fluent in English • teacher-student ratio is high • no uniform in schools • students are very disciplined • very low drop out rates • they are very religious • no street children and no beggars • they are racist, they discriminate • they do not do hard work / no manual labour • advanced technology • efficient, well trained, specialised personnel and managers who are well informed	• few boarding schools • people are honest and friendly • do not stay close with relatives • rich and generous people • always saying thank you even for small things • different languages • men and women do house work • no sign of poverty, few beggars • too much use of computers and IT • organised transport and towns • high discipline in social lives • very few handshakes • it is not a paradise • well tarmacked roads • the teaching personnel are well trained and highly specialised • excellent facilities • time is money in the UK, they are strict on time • fewer men are teachers in the UK schools

Mexican learners before and after a partnership with a school in England

Before the partnership	**After a year of a partnership**
• people are intelligent and cultured • it is a very good country • there are lots of people who are intelligent so it is very developed • people read books • they have goals to work to • they have made lots of inventions • they are mentally and physically better than us	• they do not have a lot of traditions like us • issues are discussed more freely • young people have a lot of freedom • they have a different attitude to their family • family values are not so important • there are good and bad things about England • people do not live with their grandparents

Mexican learners' responses from Cumbria Development Education Centre

> **Web links**
> For activities about perceptions
> Oxfam: **www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/teachers/globciti/profdev**

DFID Global School Partnerships

Staff involvement

Partnerships are more successful and sustainable if they involve as many colleagues in school as possible.

Staff have a lot to gain from and a lot to offer a global school partnership so it is important to identify how they can be enabled to do so. Partnerships are an opportunity for professional and personal development. Although partnerships do take time, if the partnership is embedded in the curriculum it becomes an essential element of school life. Inclusion and the concept of taking a journey together are important ways of approaching the partnership.

Given the workload facing teachers today I was afraid that activities organised to strengthen the partnership would be seen as yet another burden. I shouldn't have worried. Everyone I spoke to was genuinely excited about taking part.

Catherine Montgomery, Thornhill College, Northern Ireland partnered with Smuts Ndamase School, South Africa.

Tensions and conflicts will inevitably arise. Again, openness and honesty are the best ways to deal with this. If there is a problem don't ignore it. Listen, reflect, listen again, negotiate, compromise and move on. If necessary enlist a third party to help.

Some of the potential benefits of global school partnerships include:
• staff development
• personal development
• curriculum development
• whole school development
• team building
• involvement of teaching and non-teaching staff at different levels of seniority and across stages and departments
• learner motivation
• innovative practice.

A quick guide to staff involvement
• Involve as many colleagues as possible from an early stage. This generates wide interest in the partnership and helps build consensus about motives for and the development of the partnership.
• Establish a partnership committee to share responsibility.
• Make sure that current information about partnership aims, activities and future directions is easily available.
• Find ways of engaging colleagues in the educational benefits of the partnership.
• Create opportunities at all stages for colleagues to participate in and make suggestions about partnership development.
• Provide a range of ways for colleagues to get involved – with expectations of different time commitments.
• Involve colleagues in professional and personal development activities.
• When new staff arrive make an effort to tell them about the partnership and explore ways that they might get involved.
• Ensure that exchange visits are shared fairly among staff.
• Have whole-school celebrations of success.

? Use the quick guide to identify one practical way of involving more colleagues in your partnership. Are colleagues in agreement about motives for partnership?

Learner involvement

In school partnerships it is important that learners on both sides are moving towards more active participation at the same time. Hart's 'Ladder of Participation' explores the various degrees of participation.

Learner-initiated, shared decisions with adults
Young people have the ideas, set up projects and come to adults for advice, discussion and support. The adults do not direct but offer their expertise for young people to consider.

Learner-initiated and directed
Young people have the initial idea and decide how the project is to be carried out. Adults are available but do not take charge.

Adult-initiated, shared decisions with learners
Adults have the initial idea but young people are involved in every step of the planning and implementation. Not only are their views considered but they are also involved in taking the decisions.

Consulted and informed
The project is designed and run by adults but young people are consulted. They have a full understanding of the process and their opinions are taken seriously.

Assigned but informed
Adults decide on the project The young people understand the project, they know who decided to involve them, and why.

Hart's 'Ladder of Participation' in *Children's Participation: The Theory and Practice of Involving Young Citizens in Community Development and Environmental Care*, Roger Hart, UNICEF, 1997

Increasing the level of learner participation will have an impact on school ethos and culture. This needs the involvement of senior management. Increased participation is about developing new relationships between teachers and learners. These are rooted in mutual trust, dialogue and respect. These may challenge views about the role of young people in their respective societies.

Many schools have effective learners' councils and the partnership can be part of their deliberations. The School Councils UK (1998), states that a school or classroom council can enable learners to develop their skills in:

"… presenting reasoned arguments; listening and responding calmly to points of view that are critical of their own; contributing towards problem-solving on issues of mutual concern; working effectively with others to create social harmony within the class; learning peer mediation skills; where necessary, having the courage and confidence to express a point of view that is not necessarily supported by others."

? Use Hart's 'Ladder of Participation' to identify how learners in your school typically participate in your partnership. Identify ways of:
• moving from adult-led to more learner-led activity in your partnership
• ensuring learner-led activities are genuine collaborations between learners in the partner schools rather than led by learners in one school.

Widening participati

Participation means it is my right to have the opportunity to be involved in making decisions, planning and reviewing an action that might affect me. Having a voice, having a choice. My voice, my choice.

Gemma Woolley, winner of the Welsh Participation Consortium's sound bite competition

Learners at a school in east London are so involved in the running of their school that the interview all prospective teachers – even the head…
The 70 pupils involved in the 'Making Learning Better' scheme regularly observe teachers' lessons and make suggestions about how classroom displays, teachin styles and discipline can be improved.

The Guardian, 8 March 2006

Many schools have peer mentoring schemes where learners in both schools support and help others. This builds confidence and self-esteem and increases participation in school life. Some of these schemes have been extended so that learners from partner schools mentor each other.

Learners sharing plans

Building Effective Partnerships

? Discuss with colleagues the range of learners that participate in your partnership. Are they representative of both schools in terms of gender, race, age, religion, ability and achievement? How can you extend learner participation?

Web links
Children's and Young People's Participation Network: a network for practitioners to stimulate discussion about improving children's and young people's participation
www.uwe.ac.uk/solar/ChildParticipationNetwork/Home.htm
Every Child Matters: a policy document for schools in England which encourages learner participation **www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/aims**
Save the Children Fund: gives information about Save the Children's work involving children and young people in decision-making
www.savethechildren.org.uk

School Councils: gives information about establishing school councils and encouraging participation **www.schoolcouncils.org**

School-community partnerships

Involving local communities generally makes partnerships more sustainable and learning becomes more meaningful and widespread. Community involvement can also contribute to global citizenship goals. However, care should be taken that community involvement does not weaken the equity-based assumptions within the partnership.

What is a community?
A community is a group of people with something in common. They may live in the same area, have a common background, shared interests such as religion, politics or sport. In any one area there are many communities and people are likely to belong to more than one community at a time. Communities interact with each other and change over time.

We all have 'multiple identities' determined and influenced by factors such as wealth and poverty, culture, religious and other beliefs, gender, ethnicity and work. These in turn have been influenced by globalisation, history and migration. We all belong to a range of communities reflecting this diversity. In light of this, it is necessary to ensure that different perspectives contribute to a better understanding of our own and other communities.

These are some ideas for involving local communities:
• community representatives take active roles in partnership committees
• partners visit local community groups during exchange visits
• hold public talks and celebrations
• hold education events for community audiences
• provide input to adult and community education courses
• engage with young people out of school
• work with local campaign groups that promote fair trade, human rights and social justice, an end to poverty, sustainable development, etc.

• involve communities in fund-raising events for the partnership
• have the partnership recognised by local authorities as an official community partnership
• encourage community activity, independent of the school
• involve community members in visits to partner countries.

Benefits of involving communities

For the school:
• input from local people with real experience and knowledge
• local businesses and other groups may be interested in supporting the partnership financially and in kind
• the school's profile is raised locally
• if the local community already has connections with your partner country they may be able to provide support with communications, practical advice about reciprocal visits and identify in-country support for your partner school.

For communities:
• a source of public education and active global citizenship
• brings communities together and contributes to social cohesion
• strengthens existing community partnerships and links.

Learners' activity

Identify a range of local groups, e.g. young people, men, women, business people, elders, parents with young children, disabled people, unemployed people. Ask each to create maps of the community, marking key features. Compare these. Are the same key features identified?

Community gardening club

© Charmouth Primary School

Planning for community involvement

- What global dimension activity is already happening in our local communities, e.g. related to equity, social cohesion and inclusion, justice, sustainable development, poverty-reduction, diversity, human rights, conflict resolution?
- Why might these individuals and groups be interested in getting involved with our school partnership?
- What particular aspect of our partnership activity might they get involved in?
- What challenges and opportunities might their involvement bring? What are their expectations? What support will they need? How will their involvement affect the existing dynamics within the partnership? Have we got jobs for people to do, or do we want them to bring new ideas?
- How can we reach them – either as groups or as individuals?
- What are their preconceptions about our partner and about the aims of the partnership?

- How will we keep the community involved once we have started?
- What should be our first steps?

Remember:
- Community concerns tend to be local, so activities and issues need to have local relevance for communities to be interested.
- Involving local communities is not just about bringing benefits to the school; it is a two-way process that should also benefit the communities.
- Local communities may hold stereotypes that you do not want to reinforce in your partnership. How will you deal with this?
- People who have knowledge of your partner country may not share your values or share the educational, sustainable and equity-based aims of a global school partnership.
- Once community members are involved, someone has to do the work of keeping them involved.

Visioning and planning

Using the image of a bridge, or a rainbow or a river, helps groups to identify where they are, where they want to be, and how to bridge the gap between the two.

The characteristics of the current situation are listed at one end of the bridge or rainbow or river; and those of where you would like to be are listed at the other. The factors necessary to successfully reach the other side are also identified, e.g. community profile (time, resources, interest), staff time needed, management support in school. Post-it notes can be added between each factor to represent ways to achieve these things, strategies or aspirations.

where we are   where we want to be
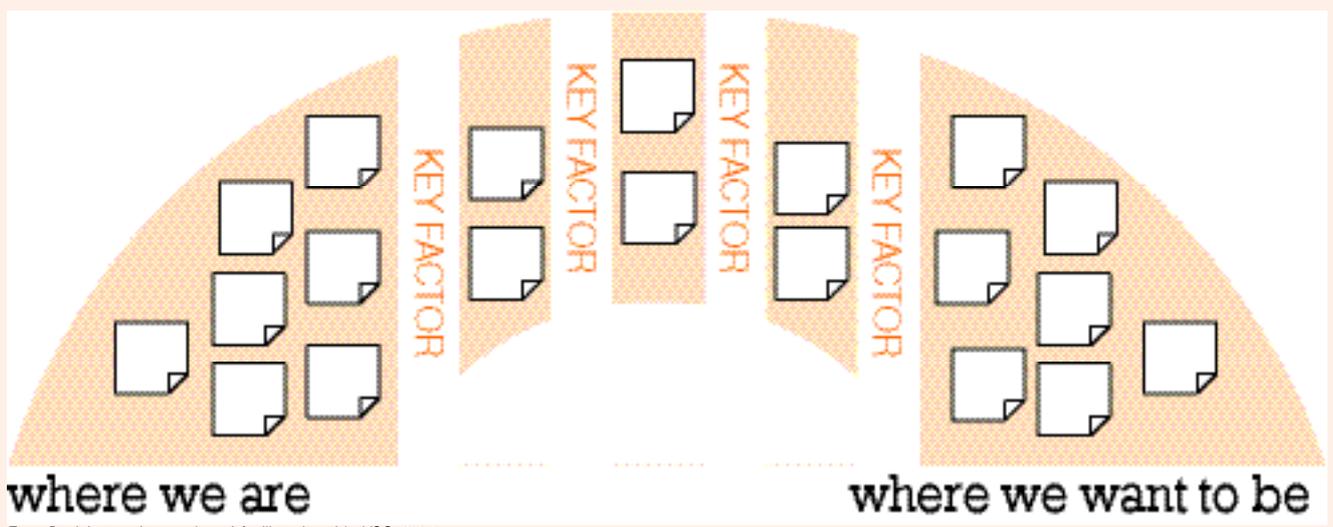
From *Participatory Approaches: A facilitator's guide*, VSO, 2004

? How involved are local communities in your partnership and how could this be improved? Create your own image to illustrate and help plan what you are going to do.

Finding a partner

There are a number of places to start looking for a partner school.

Global Gateway

The Department for Education and Skills Global Gateway website includes a large database of schools that are interested in establishing partnerships. We recommend that you:

- register a profile of your school on this site, so that other schools can search for your details.
- actively search the Global Gateway database for potentially suitable partners and approach between five and ten of these. See what responses you receive and take it from there.

Schools with existing partnerships

Find out about local schools which already have partnerships. Can they help you find a partner? Is there a cluster partnership already in place locally? Could you join as a new school?

Community contacts

Your local communities may have contacts which you can follow up. There may be a twinning association or links through faith groups, charities, businesses or local family connections.

Personal contacts

Staff and parents may have contacts which can be followed up. Several global school partnerships have resulted from teachers' holiday or family visits.

Organisations which can put partners in touch

There are a range of initiatives which can help identify partners. Some of these initiatives have charitable or development aims rather than joint global dimension learning aims. There may also be a fee payable by UK schools. Check their websites to find out more about their work:

Afritwin: www.afritwin.net (UK and South Africa)

Global Dimension Trust: www.globaldimensiontrust.org (UK, India and Kenya)

Gondar Link: www.gondarlink.org.uk (UK and Ethiopia)

League for the Exchange of Commonwealth Teachers: www.lect.org.uk (Commonwealth countries)

Link Community Development: www.lcd.org.uk/uk/lsp (UK, South Africa, Ghana, Uganda and Malawi)

Mida International: www.mida-international.com (UK, South Africa, Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania)

Pahar Trust: www.pahar-trust.org (UK and Nepal)

Specialist Schools Trust: www.specialistschools.org.uk (UK and South Africa)

Some things to think about:

- Finding a school that has something in common with yours is a good starting point for curricular work. For example, schools in rural areas often use farming as a common theme; schools in cities look at urban development; and partnerships between Sri Lanka and Northern Ireland might explore conflict resolution.
- For schools wishing to develop mutual learning partnerships DFID Global School Partnerships recommends that learners work with counterparts at roughly the same stages and ideally of similar ages.
- Schools wishing to use a partnership in order to begin exploring diversity might first consider developing a partnership with a school in another area of their own country.

Web links
BBC World Class: for information about organisations that arrange and support partnerships
www.bbc.co.uk/worldclass/getstarted/
Global Gateway: search for partners or register your school's details **www.globalgateway.org**
Local Government International Bureau:
www.lgib.gov.uk/international/establishing_a_partnership/twinning.search.html

Cluster partnerships

Cluster partnerships involve two or more schools in the same locality partnering with two or more schools in another locality. Normally these are within easy travelling distance of each other so that face-to-face meetings can be held at least once a term. Each school within the cluster tends to form a direct relationship with one of the schools in the partner country. Cluster co-ordinators in both countries take responsibility for ensuring cohesion among cluster partners.

Types of clusters

Cross-phase clusters: These enable older and younger learners to work together and provide long-term continuity.

Secondary school clusters: These make whole school approaches more practical as the curricular innovation in one school can be replicated in another. Specialist expertise and enthusiasms can be shared. More cross-curricular activity is likely to happen.

Primary school clusters: These can increase capacity for schools with a small number of staff.

Mainstream-special school clusters: These encourage inclusive practice.

Schools with learners from different backgrounds: These recognise the diversity within countries and are a good preparation for engaging with diversity at a distance.

Single-sex clusters: These enable girls and boys from single sex schools in partner countries to work together.

Benefits

- Resources, workloads, ideas and schemes of work can be shared, thereby strengthening the partnership locally and ensuring the benefits are reaped.
- Capacity is increased.
- New schools may join an existing cluster and be mentored through the early stages.
- Challenges can be faced jointly.

Challenges

- Planning and communication become more complex.
- Procedures and processes need to be agreed to sustain the partnership.
- Different levels of commitment make it difficult for schools to contribute and participate equally.

Building Effective Partnerships

Our cluster partnership involves three schools in the UK and three in Tanzania. The UK schools already had a well-established working relationship, are situated close to each other and worked collaboratively on projects on a regular basis. In contrast, the Tanzanian schools are far apart and had no history of working together – the partnership has changed that. The Tanzanian schools now meet regularly to discuss the partnership and its development. The charity Development Direct established the original links, then schools exchanged school-to-school contracts, photographs and letters.

In January 2005 the UK partners visited Tanzania. A workshop was held for the headteachers. This highlighted many misconceptions on both sides. Joint projects were planned which centred on shared books. In May 2005, the Tanzanian partners visited the UK. This really cemented the relationship. Projects agreed have been small, achievable and fit into both curricula. Our partnership has added an exciting dimension to the curricula of all schools – a real buzz. We would recommend such a partnership to all.

Frances Gowland, Headteacher of Our Lady & St Thomas RCVA Primary School, England partnered with Kivulini Primary School, Tanzania. Other schools in the cluster are Willington Church of England Primary School partnered with Nkoraya Primary and Hartside Primary School partnered with Shilela Academy.

? Consider the different types of clusters and the benefits and challenges. Discuss whether forming a cluster might benefit your school.

Early stages of partnership

Make initial contact with a school to explore the possibilities of partnership:

- Send an introductory letter to the headteacher explaining why you are interested in partnership. The letter could include information about your school and local communities; strengths and challenges for your school; current development priorities; long-term visions for the partnership; and ideas for global dimension themes within the curriculum.
- If you receive a positive reply, share this with colleagues and plan what you will do with the information.
- Check out how staff in each school will be able to communicate with each other. Is there e-mail access in the school or at a nearby internet café? If not, what other means of communication are there, e.g. mobile phones, postal services, via a third party or working with a neighbouring school which does have facilities?

Finding reliable means of communication

Partnerships between schools in wealthier parts of the world have high reliance on e-mail technology to communicate and establish joint curriculum projects at a distance. Many of the schools involved in global school partnerships, particularly those in rural areas, do not have e-mail facilities to support virtual contact. The postal service may also be unreliable and slow. This has implications for the development of partnership relationships.

Partner schools need to explore ways of establishing reliable ways of communicating as soon as they start working with each other. Do not immediately think that the only solution is for one school to provide computer and internet equipment for the other. Fundraising to provide and

ship communications technology in the very early stages of partnership may establish expectations on both sides that the partnership is primarily about improving school facilities rather than learning together. There are also technological and practical considerations that need to be taken into account to ensure the effective use of new equipment. For example, the reliability or lack of electricity and connectivity, secure storage places for equipment, the need for training, maintenance and upgrading all have to be considered.

A lack of computers and internet connections does not mean that communication is impossible. We would encourage partner schools to make every effort to find alternative means of communication rather than exclude poorly resourced schools from learning partnerships. Popular alternatives are using fax machines or text messaging to inform partners that e-mails have been sent which can be accessed at local internet cafés.

In the Congo, because there is no working postal service, people leave letters in Catholic churches to be transmitted to other parts of the Congo; the Church provides the only coherent nationwide infrastructure.
www.learningafrica.com

The use of mobile phones is increasing much faster in Africa than anywhere else in the world; 75 per cent of all telephones in Africa are mobile.

www.learningafrica.com

The thing to appreciate is how hard it is for our partners to contact us. Two of our schools do not have electricity never mind computers. To e-mail, our teachers have to travel quite a long distance over land. Another difficulty is that water shortages have led to electricity rationing. If we send a letter to our partners they have to call at the PO Box to collect it – it isn't like here where we have postmen! These partnerships have worked because of the commitment and friendship of all partners.

Our Lady & St Thomas RCVA Primary School, England partnered with Kivulini Primary School, Tanzania

Classroom activities to get things going

Here are some starter activities that will enable learners to share information and find out more about each other.

A Passport for Rights

Learners in both schools prepare their own 'passport'. This will include their name and a drawing of themselves.

Then, based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights they can add:

- Three examples of ways in which girls and boys are not always treated equally.
  Article 1: *All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.*
- Three ways in which you are different from a friend of yours or someone in your class.
  Article 2: *Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.*
- What parts of your country have you visited?
  Article 13: *Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.*
- What is your nationality?
  Article 15: *Everyone has the right to a nationality.*
- Do you have a religion?
  Article 18: *Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.*
- In which year will you be able to vote?
  Article 21: *Everyone has the right to take part in choosing the government of their own country.*
- What work (not school work) have you done, who for, and did you receive a fair wage?
  Article 23: *Everyone has the right to work for a fair wage*
- When did you last go to the doctor? Have you been to hospital?
  Article 25: *Everyone has the right to medical care.*
- Can you describe a custom or something related to your culture that would be new to your partner school?
  Article 27: *Everyone has a right to celebrate their culture and customs.*

Exchange and compare the responses. What similarities and differences are there between learners?

Based on an activity in *Our World, Our Rights*, Amnesty International, 2007

Who am I?

Learners in both schools can complete writing frames, such as:

The name I like to be called is _____

Four words which describe me are _____

Things that make me feel good are_____

If a boy/girl from another country came to visit I would take them to _____

because _____

The best thing about where I live is _____

One thing I would like to see changed where I live is _____

To make the world a better place, I will _____

If I had three wishes – one for myself, one for my country and one for the world – I would wish _____

Exchange this information with your partner school and compare the responses.

The 10/10/10 strategy

At the beginning, learners are only told the name of the country their partner school will be in and the language spoken there. They should come up with:

• 10 questions they would like to ask their counterparts about themselves,

• 10 points of information about themselves that they would like their counterparts to know about them, and

• 10 rights which they feel that every child or young person should have.

For this activity the class should be divided into groups. Each group decides on 10 questions.

Each group is then asked to contribute one question, with the other groups agreeing or not as to whether the question should go in the first list of 10 questions. Any not agreed are added to a second list to be sent at a later date.

The first list of 10 agreed questions is then sent to the partner school. The other lists are developed in the same way.

Note: the second stage – 10 points of information – should be completed before you receive any questions or information from your partner school.

Activity provided by Humanities Education Centre, Tower Hamlets

Imagine

Ask learners to draw what they think their partner school is like and what the surrounding area is like. The pictures can then be compared with photos and looked at further along in the life of the partnership.

A country web

Draw a web of your ideas about your partner school's country. Exchange these with your partner school and ask them to comment. Do they think you have an accurate picture of their country? What have you missed out?

Based on an activity in *Global Express,* Development Education Project, Manchester

What's outside our classroom window?

Learners in both schools draw and annotate the view from their classroom window and exchange these.

Work to send to our partner school in Tamil Nadu.

© Edinburgh Primary School

Using the same classroom resources

A popular way of developing joint curricular work is for partner schools to share the same classroom resources and use these as a structure for collaborative classroom activities which are then exchanged.

In the third year of the partnership the children decided that they wanted their new joint project to be focused on games and leisure. When Sivagami of Brindavan Vidy Alaya School visited the UK the Humanities Education Centre introduced both schools to a big book called *Play On The Line* based on Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It made a splendid introduction to the topic.

We were also introduced to a board game made by a partnership of several schools called *Locococo*. This game highlights citizenship themes, such as poverty, rights and responsibilities, world trade and debt. It is also based on the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. Brindavan Vidy Alaya have made their own version, entitled Anjaraipetti, which Edinburgh Primary School contributed to. They gave us a copy of their final version when we visited. It is a fantastic game and beautifully produced. It has been enjoyed in both countries and has developed children's awareness of global issues in a way that direct teaching may not inspire.

Brindavan Vidy Alaya School, Tamil Nadu, India partnered with Edinburgh Primary School, London, England

Sivagami explaining Anjaraipetti to teachers at a professional development session in Mumbai.

Web Links
Global dimension websites with classroom activities
Children's rights, poverty reduction and trade:
www.learningafrica.org.uk
Fair trade: **www.fairtrade.org.uk**
Global weeks: **www.globaldimensionsouthwest.org.uk/downloads/Global_Focus_Weeks.pdf**
Global footprints: **www.globalfootprints.org**
The Locococo game: **www.locococo.org**
Sustainable development activities: **www.dfes.gov.uk/aboutus/sd**
Teachers in Development Education: **www.tidec.org/Resources/online-res**

Staff exchange visits

Visits between partner school staff consolidate a partnership, providing staff with the opportunity to develop stronger professional relationships through personal contact.

Visits allow staff to experience their partner school's educational system first-hand and so strengthen their understanding of how best to develop the partnership for the benefit of both schools. Visits are also beneficial on a personal level, as staff and learners can gain first-hand experience of different countries and cultures.

The first visits should lay the foundations for long-term, joint global dimension work. The main purpose of these initial visits is to build effective working relationships between colleagues and to begin discussion about a partnership agreement (pages 33–34).

You can't prepare us to fit into a different culture – we've got to go and find out for ourselves.
Teacher from the Shetland Isles on a visit to South Africa

Before the visit:
- exchange school and community profiles and as much background information as possible
- exchange draft plans and objectives for the visit
- do some work on your own expectations of what you want in the partnership agreement
- familiarise yourself with background information about the country and culture
- learn as much of the local language as you can and at least be able to greet people
- the host school should draw up a provisional programme and share it with the visiting school for comment and approval
- ask learners to prepare material that you can take with you, e.g. a guide of the local area, questions they would like to ask learners in the partner school

- ask colleagues what information they would like you to collect for them and how they would like you to record and present it
- think about the environmental impact of your visit and take what action you can to offset this, e.g. staff and learners in your school can make energy savings to match the carbon emissions produced by the transport used on the journey
- use the checklist on page 30.

© Ashcott Primary School. © Edinburgh Primary School

A staff visit to Togoi Primary School, Kenya

A staff visit to Edinburgh Primary School, England

During initial visits

These are possible activities to undertake during initial visits:
- get to know partnership committee members
- begin work on drafting a partnership agreement (see pages 33–34)
- observe lessons
- have meetings with senior management and attend staff meetings
- shadow learners
- get involved in teaching
- use the Oxfam *Education for Global Citizenship* grids (pages 61–63) to identify what's already happening in each school's curriculum and find areas of commonality
- plan joint curricular work
- plan for the return visit
- evaluate the visit
- take photos and collect objects and resources for use back home, involve learners in selecting what they would like you to take back with you.

We spent half a day teaching in an Indian government-funded school – 70 children in each small classroom, seated on the floor, taking their lessons before having their 'free school dinners' that had been cooked in a cauldron on a log fire in the dirt playground outside. The head teacher talked to us of his plans for the pupils and the school. Amazingly, many of the concerns he raised were very similar to those we deal with, including the inevitable attendance issues, relationships with parents and standards of attainment.

Ysgol Gymuned y Gors, Swansea, Wales partnered with The Study School, Udaipur, India

Visiting partners

UK staff from several partnerships on a visit to Kenya in 2005 felt that the visit had impacted on them as individuals and on their schools in the following ways:
- it built confidence and self-reliance
- it changed their views and ideas about Kenya
- it improved their motivation and enthusiasm for teaching generally.

For the Kenyan hosts:
- it raised the hopes of the community
- they learnt about different teaching methodologies
- it increased student enrolment and retention as parents saw the value of the partnership.

How shocking!!

These are situations where people have been initially shocked at how things are done in a different country:

One woman considered it rude to be introduced to someone's pet dog –'This is Rex!'.

A teacher was very concerned at the use of corporal punishment in her partner school.

A man was horrified to see someone's pet snake on the sofa.

A young male teacher found it highly inappropriate that he was allocated to stay with a woman who lived on her own.

It took a long time for a woman to get used to the fact that although people said 'hello' at great length, no-one said 'goodbye'.

A woman found it shocking that elderly people lived in special homes rather than with their families.

Many visitors commented on how frustrating it was that meetings never started on time.

A man was too embarrassed to ask in what direction Mecca was.

Building Effective Partnerships

? Look at the situations in 'How shocking' Discuss how to prepare staff for situations such as these when making and hosting visits.

Checklist for visits

✓ UK staff: check the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website www.fco.gov.uk for relevant travel and security advice for your destination. Check with the High Commission or Embassy of the country you are visiting to see if you or anyone in your party needs a visa. Do this well before you are due to travel.

✓ Staff visiting the UK: check with the local British High Commission or Embassy to see if you or anyone in your party needs a visa or go to www.ukvisas.gov.uk. Do this well before you are due to travel.

✓ Make sure your hosts are aware of:
• dietary needs, e.g. vegetarianism, halal requirements, food allergies
• religious needs, e.g. Muslims are required to pray five times a day and need somewhere to wash beforehand and somewhere to put down their prayer mat facing Mecca; on Sundays Christians may wish to attend a church affiliated with their own
• personal preferences, e.g. attitudes towards pets and animals in the home, expectations of privacy, smoking preferences.

✓ Check whether you or anyone in your party need to take any health precautions, such as vaccinations, or malaria prevention and how long in advance you need to receive them. This usually requires an appointment with a doctor.

✓ Take out travel insurance including medical cover before you leave.

✓ Find out what the weather is going to be like and whether there is any special clothing or equipment you need to take with you. The UK can be very cold, windy and wet in winter. If attending any formal events take appropriate clothing.

✓ Make sure you discuss accommodation with your partner school. Will you be staying with a colleague or in a hotel?

✓ Clarify how visitors' expenses will be covered. Will visitors require an allowance? Get advice on the best way to take cash and how to top up your supply during your visit.

✓ Check with your partners on what arrangements they can provide to keep you in touch with your home and school in an emergency. Share this information with your school and home and ensure they have a copy of your programme.

✓ If there is a DFID Global School Partnerships Co-ordinator, inform them about the dates of your visit. Find out contact details on www.britishcouncil.org/globalschools.

✓ Make sure you take any equipment you will need, such as cameras, batteries, chargers and notebooks.

✓ Try to speak to colleagues who have direct experience of making a visit to the same location and discuss your expectations, anxieties and possible preconceptions. If you contact DFID Global School Partnerships, we may be able to put you in contact with a suitable person.

✓ Give other members of the school community the opportunity to send greetings that you can deliver on their behalf.

✓ Consider what gifts you can take and what is appropriate.

❓ Use the checklist to plan your visit or the visit you will be hosting.

Web links
Foreign and Commonwealth Office: **www.fco.gov.uk**
Tourism Concern: **www.tourismconcern.org.uk**
Travel health advice: **www.travelhealth.co.uk/advice/index.html** and **www.cdc.gov/travel/**
UK visas: **www.ukvisas.gov.uk**

Established partnerships

The shape of every partnership differs depending on the context and objectives, though most are based on a common set of values, a shared vision of success and a mutual commitment to improving the quality of the working relationship over time. In addition, it is useful to be clear why you are working through partnership – what are the expected benefits?

A partnership can be compared to a tree. The roots nourish and stabilise the partnership; the leaves and fruits represent the benefits and achievements. The 'roots' and 'fruits' of a successful global school partnership are:

Roots

- equity-based aspirations
- primarily about global dimension educational goals
- learners of similar stages and ages working together
- investment in establishing good partnership relationships
- expectations of participatory, reflective and inclusive ways of working
- long-term ambitious goals combined with shorter-term pragmatic ones
- motivated and committed people involved
- willingness to learn
- team working practices already in place
- viewed as a professional and personal development opportunity.

Fruits

- improved teaching and learning in all schools
- enhanced whole school curricula and ethos
- engagement and involvement of wider communities
- increased motivation
- good, honest working relationships
- greater capacities developed in partner schools
- personal and professional development achievements
- broadens the experience of learners in partner schools
- builds positively on diversity
- illustrates how much we have in common
- challenges stereotypes
- generates ideas about making the world a fairer and more sustainable place
- results in active global citizens.

© Fins Primary School

THE FOUR-WAY
of the things we think, say o
Is it the TRUTH?
Is it FAIR to all concerned?
Will it build GOOD WILL
and BETTER FRIENDSI
Will it be BENEFICIAL to
all concerned?

Does your partnership pass the four-way test?

Partnership trees

Illustrate your own partnership tree with colleagues during staff visits. Learners may also illustrate their own partnership trees.

The partnership agreement

Partnership agreements are key documents for many successful global school partnerships.

Discuss and agree on:

- the sort of partnership you want – having openly discussed your visions and aims in broad terms it is now time to work them down to some SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed).
- your educational goals – what areas of the curriculum (subjects and wider themes) you will focus on (see pages 59–94).
- who else – from the community, outside agencies etc – will be involved in your partnership.
- how you will evaluate your partnership (see pages 40–41).

Before you finalise your agreement make sure that:

- it reflects the views of all partner schools equally – it is important that it is not a document written by one school.
- it includes reasonable, acceptable and achievable aims.
- it is easy to read and remember.
- it is going to be presented in a language or languages that all those involved will understand.
- that the names of all partners schools feature prominently.

And finally:

- have the headteachers and/or chairs of governors and/or local dignitaries sign the agreement – make an occasion of it!
- review and build on the agreement annually.
- agree on a name for your partnership.

? Use the partnership agreement checklist on the following page:
- to help school staff to prepare in advance for negotiations with partners
- as an agenda for a joint discussion between partners
- to provide possible headings for a written partnership agreement
- to evaluate your existing partnership agreement.

Partnership agreement checklist

1 Vision

What is the vision for the partnership?

2 Quality

How will high standards be established and maintained? Is there a commitment to improving the quality of the relationship over time? Is the quality of teaching and learning integral to your agreement?

3 Educational objectives

How will the partnership contribute to the schools' curricula and ethos? What are your agreed educational goals? Have you identified areas of potential or actual curricular collaboration? Will educational outcomes:

• support mutual respect between learners?
• challenge and inform perceptions of global citizenship and sustainable development?
• develop critical thinking?
• encourage open-mindedness?
• develop participatory skills?

4 Values and principles

What are the schools' values and principles? How do these complement each other? Are there any non-negotiable expectations concerning values and principles?

5 Mutual trust and respect

How can mutual trust and respect be established? Should agreed indicators be identified and built into the Partnership Agreement? How will a breakdown of trust and/or respect be dealt with? Should the Partnership Agreement take account of this possibility?

6 Sustainability

What resources (people, time, skills, finance, external support) are needed to sustain the partnership?

Who is actively involved in the partnership? What can be done to reduce dependency on individuals and on particular funding sources? How might community involvement make the partnership more sustainable?

7 Inclusiveness

How inclusive is the partnership? Can this be improved upon? How can marginalised individuals and groups (in school and local communities) be more involved?

8 Obligations and responsibilities

What roles and responsibilities does each school have? What happens when/if roles change? What rights and obligations do the schools have?

9 Reporting

What methods will be used for reporting? What will be done to ensure that this is a two-way process?

10 Monitoring progress

How will progress be measured, including the development of the partnership itself? When will this happen and who will be involved/responsible? What will be done to ensure that this is an open and collaborative process? What will be the indicators for success? Who will determine these?

11 Evaluation

Who will be responsible for evaluating the overall achievements and impact of the partnership? How will this happen and when?

12 Timelines

Are there indicative and actual timelines related to specific tasks and outcomes? How detailed do these have to be in the Partnership Agreement?

13 Financial issues

If money is being transacted, what are the terms, conditions, accounting standards, means of accountability?

14 Fundraising

If fundraising is involved, is there a procedure in place to ensure the equal participation of all partners in planning, undertaking fundraising activities and in agreeing on the use of funds raised?

15 Opportunities to develop and expand

How and by whom will decisions be made about developing the partnership?

16 Conflict resolution

What mechanisms will be used to resolve conflicts? What role might third parties play (if any)? Should this be included in the Partnership Agreement?

17 Exit strategy

What are the plans for exiting from the agreement? Under what conditions might the partnership be terminated prematurely? Should this be included in the Partnership Agreement?

18 Definitions of terms

Do you have a glossary of the terms used in the agreement? Clarification and agreement of terms can be an important part of the negotiation process and may avoid future problems.

Based on WWF-UK *Organisation Development Unit Toolkit* and used with their permission.

Learner exchange visits

Taking learners to visit your partner school can be a memorable life experience. Careful planning and preparatory work will help make sure that learners are receptive to new ideas and are able to make connections with their counterparts.

… study visits are opportunities for first-hand learning on many different levels. Study visits take the visitor through a process of exploring the issues affecting people in a country, responding to the new knowledge, practising the skills and developing the attitudes that enable individuals to take action as global citizens.

Journeys into Global Understanding, UNICEF, 1995

Learners' activities to do before a visit

- Brainstorm the reasons for going. Help them focus on what they want to get out of the visit in terms of both personal and academic benefits – refine their personal and learning objectives.Think about how they will record their experience in an appropriate way – a daily diary is a good way of doing this.
- Explore ethical tourism (www.tourismconcern.org.uk). Devise an ethical tourist charter.
- Explore climate change (www.wwflearning.org.uk/ wwflearning-home/teaching-and-learning/activities-and-ideas).
- Use Philosophy for Children techniques to raise any worries or concerns learners may have (www.sapere.net and page 65).
- Make a collection of artefacts to represent their lives (pages 48–49).
- Draw mind maps of partner countries.
- Do activities on perceptions (page 16), participation (pages 18–19), communities (pages 20–21), culture shock (page 38) and diversity (pages 44–47).

Making friends on learner visits

© Faringdon Community College

Building Effective Partnerships

Planning visits

Start planning the visit about a year in advance. You will need to consult with your local education authority, headteacher and parents at the earliest opportunity. Communicate with your partner school and agree educational aims and objectives for the trip. Establish an organising team and agree different areas of responsibility. These are some of the tasks that need to be carried out:

- prepare a fair application and selection process
- find ways of subsidising visits to ensure that costs do not prevent particular learners from applying, and to ensure that equal numbers of visits can happen in both directions
- carry out a risk assessment and agree actions
- set the budget and manage it
- inform parents and obtain consents
- check dietary and medical needs
- prepare an induction programme which explores associated issues (page 35)
- check that all travellers have their own passport and visa
- have emergency contact numbers for all travellers
- get insurance cover for the whole party
- organise the hosting and accommodation arrangements
- agree safety, health and behaviour expectations with travellers
- consider whether you want the local media to cover the visit
- provide practical guidelines
- check with your local authority on guidelines for international visits.

© DFID Global School Partnerships

Teachers at a DFID Global School Partnerships workshop in the Maldives exploring perceptions about families

? Identify ways of ensuring that:
- all learners (at a certain stage in the school) have the opportunity to participate in visits if they want to
- equal numbers of learners from both partner schools are involved in visits.

Useful websites for organising visits:
Crossing Frontiers: **www.cyec.org.uk/publications.asp**
DfES: **www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/healthand safety/visits**
Global Gateway: **www.globalgateway.org**
Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents: **www.rospa.org.uk/safetyeducation/schooltrips**
Suzy Lamplugh Trust: **www.suzylamplugh.org**
Tourism Concern: **www.tourismconcern.org.uk/resources/student-support**
UNICEF: **www.unicef.org.uk/tz/resources/index.asp**

What kind of learning?

Knowledge and understanding about:

- another country's diverse customs, culture and people
- the major issues affecting the lives of people in the country
- connections between what has been learnt about the country to wider issues and shared global concerns such as the environment and social justice
- the role local people play in the development of their communities
- different perspectives of the world
- connections between conflicts, changes, hopes for the future at home and in another country.

Attitudes

- positive valuing of diversity and alternative points of view
- respect and openness towards those who may appear to be 'different' and appreciation for the commonality among peoples
- respect for the needs and contributions of all members of the group and the people encountered during the visit
- empathy
- willingness to take constructive and realistic action on the part of others
- outlook of hopefulness and a belief in one's ability to create positive change.

From *Journeys into Global Understanding*, UNICEF, 1995 ©

Skills

- ability to co-operate and to work effectively in a group to achieve common goals
- communication skills, such as the ability to observe closely, to listen actively and to gather information through questioning and discussion
- being able to detect bias, stereotypes and egocentric attitudes in oneself, in others and in the media
- being able to synthesize information and to imaginatively create a whole picture of a country from disparate sources of information
- ability to translate concern for situations in the country into appropriate, local and concrete action.

Building Effective Partnerships

travelling with…

having a good time with…

WITH is the word to remember

learning with…

talking with…

working with…

cs

Culture shock!

This activity will help to prepare learners for their visit. It focuses on how they may feel in a different culture, how to deal with so-called 'culture shock', how easy it can be to misunderstand things and how important it is to have an open mind and not jump to hasty conclusions.

You will need the use of two separate rooms, paper, pens and a selection of other items for the culture role-plays, such as string, rubber bands, hats and coloured stickers.

- Divide the group in two. Invite each group to devise a simple 'culture'. Each culture should have its own social rules, customs, greetings and values which can be demonstrated by body movement and noise but without the use of any recognisable language. Ask the groups to be imaginative but to keep their culture simple. 'Outsiders' seeking to find out about the culture will visit each group.
- Tell both groups they can use the items available or make props to represent money, to wear, to greet others etc.
- Read out this example of a made-up culture:
  Although your culture is very curious and friendly, smiling is considered to be very rude. In your culture you greet others with a very vigorous handshake, shaking of the head and the word Ogou. Women have greater authority. The Ogou people trade with paper. Paper marked with a cross is especially valuable and sometimes given as a special gift.

- Separate the two groups and give them 20 minutes to devise their own culture and practise it. Let the groups know when they have had 10 minutes.
- Ask each group to send two visitors to the other group. Their job is to find out all they can about the other culture by participating in it for five minutes. They then report back to their group. Other group members make their visit. The groups try to work out what the other culture is about.
- Call both groups together to debrief. Ask for their impressions of the other culture. Were they accurate?

  Debriefing:
  - How did the visitors feel?
  - How did the groups feel about outside visitors coming into their culture?
  - Has anyone in the group actual experiences to share?
  - You may wish to do the iceberg activity (pages 44–45) as part of the debriefing.

Invite the group to consider whether this exercise has any lessons for their forthcoming visit. The following points may come up:
- The importance of language as a means of communication. Even a few words in the local language will be well received.
- The importance and value of non-verbal communication. The group might like to brainstorm other ways to communicate, such as using facial expressions, body language, mime or sign language.
- Different communities may interpret signals and behaviours in different ways.
- It can be easy to get things wrong – sometimes mistakes give offence but most often they are a source of discussion and humour.
- The more the group knows about the communities they are visiting the more likely they are to be able to deal with new experiences. However, a little knowledge of other communities can be misleading as it can lead to stereotypes.
- It can be difficult to let go of the familiar. Groups sometimes stick together for 'protection' and miss out on a lot of experiences.
- Most people take their own culture for granted and don't question it.
- The importance of sharing differences (without imposing these) and being open to learning from others.

During and after visits

The visit is most likely to be successful if learners are willing:
- to keep an open mind, be sensitive and adapt to the culture and customs of their hosts as appropriate.
- to be responsible for what they do and say.
- to be prepared to try new things.

Camera etiquette
- Ask your hosts about local sensitivities regarding photographs.
- Carry a small and simple camera and assign one person to act as the photographer. This role can be rotated during the visit. Share the role of photographer with counterparts from your partner school.
- Offer to send copies.
- If asked to pay for the privilege of taking someone's picture, accept or decline courteously. Never offer money to someone who is reluctant to be photographed.
- Think critically about the subjects being selected for the photos. Will it perpetuate stereotypes?
- Spend at least one day without a camera.
- Do not take photographs of people who cannot give permission, such as when inside a moving vehicle.
- If time is spent with a family ask them if they would like to use the camera.

Adapted from *Journeys into Global Understanding,* UNICEF 1995 ©

After visits
- Learners can feel deflated or disorientated immediately after a visit. It is important to follow up the visits by giving them opportunities to discuss how it went and to reflect on the experience.
- Return to the objectives and check to see whether they have been met or not.
- Look at the work learners did before they went and make comments on how their ide changed. What surpris most? What surprised them least?
- Do an evaluation they think it was well planned, did they have enough information. Were they prepared enough? What would they change?
- What advice would they give to someone else going for the first time?

cs

Charter for Tourists
- Water, electricity, gas or wood may be scarce or expensive so don't use more than you have to.

- If you travel by local public transport you get to see more and meet more people.

- Appreciate the customs, traditions and local way of life. See it all within the wider context of the country you are in.

- Try to sample local food. Your hosts will be pleased if you do.

- Dress appropriately.

- Buy souvenirs that were actually made in that country.

- Make sure you would be welcomed back!

Based on and adapted from Charter for Tourists in *Crossing Frontiers*. Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council

Reviewing and evaluating your partnership

Reviewing the partnership jointly provides an opportunity to stand back and look honestly at how things are going. Are you achieving what you intended? What impact is the partnership having on both schools? What do learners think? What's working and what's not working? The answers to these questions will inform the decisions you need to take for the next step forward.
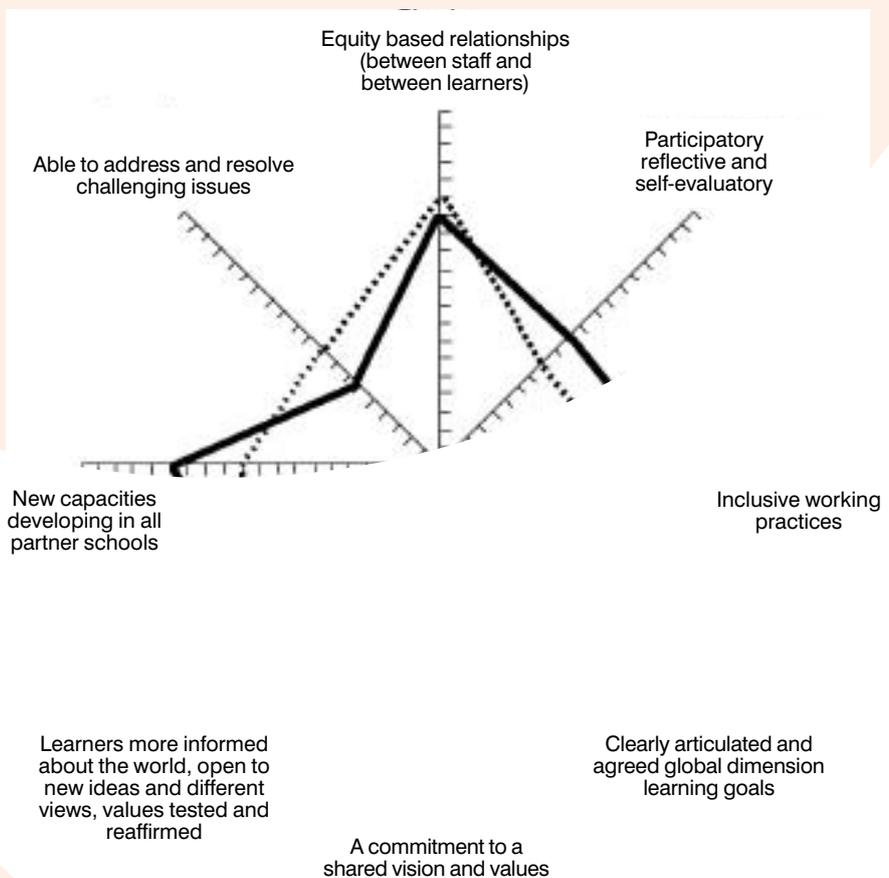
Reviews can:
- identify how the partnership relates to the ethos of the schools and contributes to broad educational policies and goals
- reflect on and improve partnership activities
- identify curricular impact and staff development needs
- collect evidence about the impact of the partnership on learners, staff and local communities
- plan for progression and continuity in learning
- inform others of what works and what doesn't
- provide evidence to your school communities and to external funding bodies about successes
- identify longer-term impact.

School partnerships are dynamic; they evolve and adapt in response to changing circumstances and as they develop, so too will your evaluation questions and approaches. It is therefore essential to keep the educational aims of your partnership in mind and to revisit them from time to time to assess:
- how successfully they have been achieved

- whether they need to be revised in agreement with your partner school
- how they might be developed in the future.

The main challenge in evaluation is to systematically gather information and evidence about the partnership, and use it to inform future development.
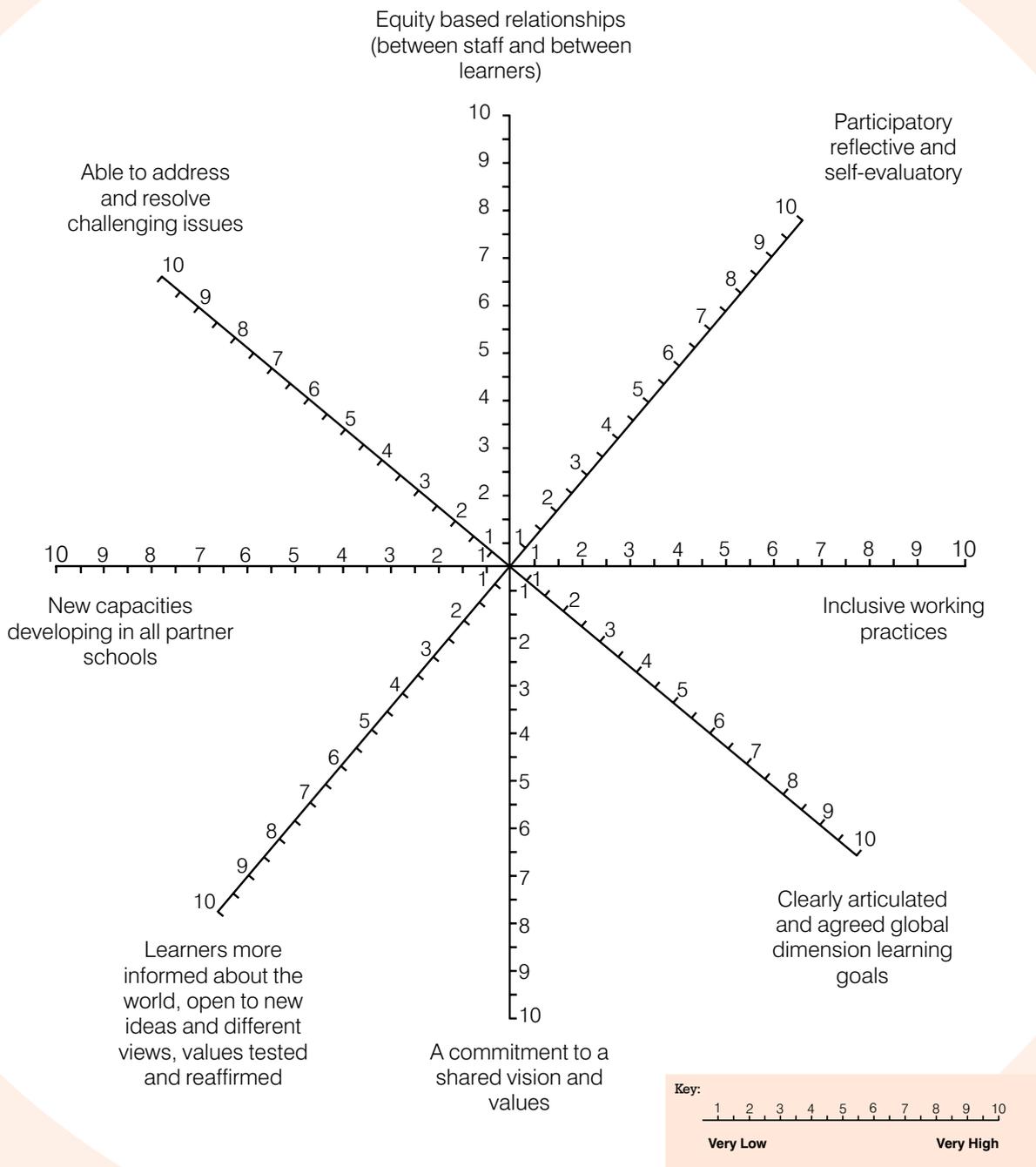

Equity based relationships
(between staff and between learners)

Able to address and resolve challenging issues

Participatory reflective and self-evaluatory

New capacities developing in all partner schools

Inclusive working practices

Learners more informed about the world, open to new ideas and different views, values tested and reaffirmed

Clearly articulated and agreed global dimension learning goals

A commitment to a shared vision and values

Partner evaluation framework
This framework gives a visual representation of the 'shape of the partnership' and allows for easy comparisons between different perceptions. In the example here the different perceptions of two schools in a partnership are represented by a solid line and a dotted line.

Based on *WWF Organisation Development Unit Toolkit* with their permission.

Partnership evaluation framework

Equity based relationships (between staff and between learners)

Participatory reflective and self-evaluatory

Able to address and resolve challenging issues

New capacities developing in all partner schools

Inclusive working practices

Learners more informed about the world, open to new ideas and different views, values tested and reaffirmed

A commitment to a shared vision and values

Clearly articulated and agreed global dimension learning goals

Key:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very Low   **Very High**

Based on *WWF Organisation Development Unit Toolkit* with their permission.

Use the partnership evaluation framework to evaluate your partnership. You may wish to change the criteria used.

Building Effective Partnerships

Exit strategy

Partnerships are fluid and change over time, influenced by an array of internal and external factors ranging from staff changes to school closure, from changing educational priorities to social conflict and war.

Although the main characteristic of a global school partnership is collaborative learning about global development issues, there may come a point when the relationship is no longer mutually beneficial. It is important to identify when this happens in order to begin an appropriate process of mutual preparation to end the partnership. Planning this process with partners can be a form of risk management that enables schools to end the relationship on good terms and with minimum disruption.

The exit strategy should be realistic and provide a broad outline of the transition process, identifying the priorities and key milestones and outlining the justification for the exit.

Key elements of an exit strategy:

- Start with a plan for ending the relationship.
- Ensure that the strategy contains objectives that are realistic.
- Make sure that everyone understands and agrees the reasons for ending the partnership.
- The exit strategy should promote the capacity of each partner.
- Power issues should be acknowledged within the strategy and monitored relating to how they affect the process of exiting.
- Criteria for re-entry to, or re-engagement with the partnership could be developed (if appropriate).

Enabling factors that promote the success of an exit strategy:

- Partnerships that are time-bound may set expectations for the partnership's end, which should make the ending of the relationship easier.
- The more participatory the nature of the partnership, the more both partners may be able to recognise the need for exit.

Discuss:
- your experience of exit strategies
- your experience of partnerships ending
- the appropriacy of raising exit strategies with your partner.