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**The Partnership Between Kangaroo Child and Youth
Development Society and Save the Children
Fund-USA, Ethiopia Field Office**

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Executive Summary

The partnership between Kangaroo Child and Youth Development Society (KCYDS) and Partnerships for Innovation in Education (PIE) is one of ten between Save the Children USA and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) in Ethiopia. PIE is a visionary partnership project, funded by the Banyan Tree Foundation, US, which supports local NGOs and CBOs to provide innovative educational programs that address the dire need for access to quality education in Ethiopia. By supporting the program and organizational development of the local institutions, PIE is building the capacity of the indigenous civil society to carry out innovative and sustainable education programs. The project is only two years old at the time of the case, yet shows signs of success in the emergence of new educational services and strengthening of the local NGOs and CBOs. The focus of the case study is on the way in which the partnerships have evolved, and the characteristics that make the project a unique one. The partnership between KCYDS and PIE is highlighted as an example of one of PIE's partner organizations.

Evolution of the Partnership

PIE was created through an opportunity provided by the Banyan Tree Foundation to develop capacity-building partnerships with local NGOs and CBOs in Ethiopia's education sector. Save had a strong record in education in its Strong Beginnings program, and had begun to make a strategic shift towards partnerships in 1994. The initiative from the Banyan Tree Foundation made it possible to create a unique action research project in two Africa field offices, Ethiopia and Mozambique, focused on supporting local civil society organizations to develop innovative approaches to education programming.

PIE was established with a value-driven process-oriented vision of partnership. Primary emphasis is on building relationships of mutual understanding, trust, and open communication. PIE interacts flexibly with its partners, responding to new developments and problems as appropriate. A supportive learning environment is created to encourage the development of innovative and appropriate models. Technical assistance and relatively small amounts of funding strengthen the capacity of local NGOs and CBOs to carry on their work long after the PIE project ceases.

Once conceptualized and staffed, the PIE team went about finding local partners and then implementing the project. They first scanned the environment carefully so as to select appropriate partners. The initial process required patience and sensitivity. Many local NGOs were not used to the new approach to partnerships and innovative programming. Through dialogue and on-going exchange, PIE was able to identify and select ten local partners, seven NGOs and three CBOs.

Current Partnership Arrangements

The most important elements of the cooperation between PIE and its partners like KCYDS are the human, informal, relationships. The PIE team has invested a lot of its resources into creating open, friendly, and warm relations with its partners. Communication is frequent, and often takes place through spontaneous visits or phone calls. Formal arrangements like proposals, written agreements, and reports are utilized, but only to support and document what has been understood by both parties. PIE avoids typical arrangements like contracts and pre-specified reporting formats, which can be too rigid and burdensome for local NGOs. By negotiating memorandums of understanding and reporting requirements with partners, they arrive at mutually satisfactory and useful arrangements.

Systemic Influences on the Partnership

PIE, as a unique project in Save, has benefited from the supportive environment created by the Ethiopian field office directors. PIE has had the autonomy it needs to develop new ways of working with local NGOs and CBOs. The donor, the Banyan Tree Foundation, has also been a key part of PIE's success in Save. The grant not only made the project possible, but Banyan Tree's flexible and visionary ways of interacting with PIE staff have provided an environment in which they could work out their own flexible and visionary ways of interacting with the local organizations.

PIE has taken a proactive approach to working with the Ethiopian government, which is an extremely influential force in the country. PIE and the local organizations see their role as complementing the government schools, and recruit government officials as allies who will appreciate the advantages of the new models they are developing. In addition, PIE has catalyzed a network among its partners and others working in basic education to share experiences and develop policy suggestions for the government.

The Value of the Partnership Achievements, Future Hopes and Challenges

Both partners value the partnership highly. Kangaroo has found in PIE a partner who supports the development of its mission and programs. In contrast, many local NGOs in Ethiopia perceive partnerships with international NGOs to threaten their mission and autonomy, even as they provide needed financial resources. The warm relations, the practice of open communication and dialogue, and the capacity-building approach all support, rather than dominate, Kangaroo's own efforts to provide alternative education programs.

The PIE team reports a number of indicators of success with the project, even at this early stage.

- Several communities without formal schools now have self-managed schools
- New models of low-cost, accessible and culturally appropriate education
- Increased enrollment of girls and falling drop-out rates of both genders
- Local NGOs are building their capacity in program and management skills

The biggest challenge to the success of the partnership is the need for further mobilization of financial resources. Although much can be done with encouragement, innovation, networking, and participatory management, it will take significant financial resources to address the extreme needs for education in Ethiopia. To this end, KICYDS would like to see a 5-year, rather than 3-year agreement with PIE. For its part, PIE is actively working with Kangaroo and other partners to develop their proposal writing and fund raising skills. Already, Kangaroo has two projects approved by other donors.

Finally, the real test of whether the PIE project succeeds will only come in the future. If successful, PIE will have helped catalyze and support the emergence of an indigenous civil society based sector in Ethiopia committed to education. For that to happen, the local NGOs and CBOs will need to further develop their leadership roles and collective influence. They will need to mobilize additional resources from inside and outside of the country. They will have to develop their capacity to scale up, as well as innovate new programs. Of course, there will be many forces and factors that determine whether or not the local organizations take up the role they are now envisaging. It would be worthwhile for Save to track the long-term impact of the PIE project. If the results bear out the early signs of success, the value of replicating the PIE approach in other countries and other development fields will be very high.

The Partnership between Kangaroo Child and Youth Development Society and Save the Children Fund-USA, Ethiopia Field Office

Throughout Ethiopia, the lack of access to education for school-age children is a serious problem. Only 30% of the eligible population are enrolled in schools. Of this number, far fewer girls than boys receive an education. In response to this pressing social issue, a new kind of partnership between an international nongovernmental organization (INGO) and local civil society organizations has emerged. The goal of Save the Children Fund USA's Partnerships for Innovations in Education (PIE) project is to develop capacities of local NGOs and CBOs to enable them to carry out innovative basic education programs, as alternatives to the traditional formal system. PIE focuses on capacity building of local civil society organizations because they are seen as the key to sustainable results. Strong local NGOs and CBOs will be able to play an ongoing leadership role in developing the education sector in Ethiopia, regardless of whether Save and other international NGOs remain active in the country. Value-driven partnerships with local NGOs and CBOs are the means by which their program and organizational capacities are strengthened.

The project is young, only about two years old at the time of the case study. Yet it shows encouraging signs of success, such as new schools and educational services in communities excluded by the formal education system, increased numbers of girls enrolled, new centers for promoting innovative educational models, and the strengthening of local NGOs as individual organizations and through a network. The focus of this study is on the creation and implementation of the PIE project to date, exploring in depth one partnership with a local NGO, Kangaroo Child and Youth Development Society (KCYDS). In many ways, the PIE project has put into practice the ideals of North-South partnership and changed the traditional ways in which INGOs and local NGOs cooperate.

This case study explores four major aspects of the partnership between Kangaroo and PIE: (1) the evolution of the partnership, from its beginning to the present, (2) the current cooperative arrangements between the two organizations, including formal agreements and informal relations, (3) the major systemic influences on the partnership from internal organizational features and stakeholders in the external environment, and (4) the partners' assessment of the value of the partnership, including its major achievements and future hopes and challenges. The case study is intended to be useful to the two partners in their ongoing efforts to develop mutually beneficial cooperative arrangements, and to the wider community of US private voluntary organizations (PVOs) and African non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who seek to create and improve satisfying and effective partnerships for sustainable development.

Methodology

This case is one of a series of five studies of partnerships between US PVOs and African NGOs designed to identify and explore the elements which contribute to effective cooperation for sustainable development. The project is organized by the Institute for Development Research (IDR), of Boston, MA, MWENGO, of Harare, Zimbabwe, and The Global Excellence in Management Initiative (GEM), of Washington, DC and Cleveland, Ohio. Funding is provided by the Office of Private Voluntary Cooperation (PVC) of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) in Washington, DC, and the in-kind contributions of participating organizations. Five cases were selected from among nine volunteered by US PVOs in response to the following criteria: (1) located in Southern and Eastern Africa, (2) represents widespread PVO-NGO programs, (3) commitment to action learning, and (4) the

program has evolved over time. We sought cases in the same countries or regions in order to enhance comparability, two cases are located in Kenya, two in Ethiopia, and one in Malawi.

Information about the partnership between Kangaroo and PIE was gathered through semi-structured interviews and archival documents. Most of the interviews were conducted jointly by an African-US research team, who talked to key staff in the two organizations, representatives of one of KCYDS' community-based schools, and two other local NGO leaders involved in the PIE project. Archival documents included sample proposals from the local NGOs, project materials, and PIE's own assessments of the project.

Evolution Of The Partnership

The creation of the partnership between Kangaroo and PIE can be understood by looking at it from the perspectives of both Kangaroo and Save the Children USA. Kangaroo, or KCYDS, is a new local NGO established in 1997 to address the need for alternatives to the formal education system in Ethiopia. It was founded by a group of civil service and education professionals as a membership-oriented NGO. Its resources are provided by the volunteer efforts of its members and external grants from like-minded donors. Kangaroo's approach is to promote low-cost, culturally appropriate, gender-sensitive and community-based basic education models. It has a small office in Addis Ababa and supports several community-based schools in poor communities in Oromia region.

Kangaroo discovered the PIE project through a referral from a contact in UNICEF who thought they might have similar interests and goals. Ato Mulugeta Amena, the Executive Director, recalls that the initial discussions with PIE went very well. "*We discussed issues with them, such as innovations, non-formal education, gender, and found we had similar values, goals, and visions. We met several times, at each other's offices.*" As a result, KCYDS and PIE formed a partnership in which PIE supports KCYDS with dialogue, capacity-building, and small amounts of funding. In turn, PIE learns from KCYDS' program experience and links them with other NGOs, CBOs, and donors working on similar issues.

The PIE project has been designed and implemented in ways quite different from typical projects involving donors, INGOs, and local NGOs. These differences can be understood by examining how it has evolved through four steps or stages: (1) the creation of the project by Save the Children USA and the donor, the Banyan Tree Foundation, (2) the initial activities of the PIE project to scan the Ethiopian environment and select partners, (3) the implementation of the partnerships for mutual learning and capacity-building, and (4) the creation of a network among partners and other local NGOs for strengthening their collective impact on the education sector in Ethiopia.

Creation of the PIE Project

PIE has evolved in the context of Save's previous work in education and a strategic shift in the international organization towards working through capacity-building partnerships rather than providing direct services. PIE sees itself as part of Save's larger international 'Strong Beginnings' project in basic education, begun in 1991, which has had successful results in many countries. It is also influenced by Save's emerging new strategic orientation towards partnerships, begun in about 1994. It is one of two partnership initiatives in the Ethiopia Field Office. (The other is the Strategic Partnership approach of the Women Child Impact (WCI) Hub Country initiative.) PIE was initiated in 1997, as one of two projects in African field offices (the other in Mozambique) funded by the Banyan Tree Foundation. The Banyan Tree Foundation played a catalytic role in shaping PIE to be an action research project emphasizing innovations in education and capacity building of local NGOs and CBOs.

Michael Gibbons, the Banyan Tree representative who initiated the project, was a former Save the Children USA education program director, with experience in Ethiopia. He had formed his ideas about the needs of the education sector and potential role of the indigenous NGO and CBO community through years of service and study. At the core is a visionary, process-oriented concept of partnership between PIE and its partners. *“Basically, we had a 1-sentence goal: do innovation with local NGOs, with a process orientation that would promote friendly and humane relations”* reflects Ato Mengistu Edo, current PIE project manager. *“We had a general idea but how to do it was not very clear. Michael Gibbons came and gave a workshop in which we worked out our ideas and ways of proceeding.”*

The Banyan Tree played an unusual role for a donor in influencing, rather than driving, the project. The core values governing the partnership relations between PIE and its local partners were present in the partnership between PIE and The Banyan Tree Foundation. Key values identified by both PIE and Kangaroo can be traced back to the initial relations between PIE and Banyan Tree.

- results will stem from a relational orientation, emphasizing processes of mutual respect and trust, dialogue, and reaching mutual understanding,
- open communication and flexibility in responding to each other’s needs,
- respect for autonomy and space for new initiatives to come from partners, and
- action learning and capacity-building of implementing partners (PIE and local NGOs)

Scanning the Environment and Selecting Partners

Once they had decided on the goals and scope of the PIE project, the team’s first step was to scan the local environment to see what local NGOs were already operating in the education sector. They found it was not very easy to identify prospective partners, and worked closely with a local NGO network, Catholic Relief and Development Association (CRDA). It took about three to six months to locate appropriate partners. They developed their criteria for partnerships on the basis of their investigation. Once they understood the context of local NGOs, they chose their criteria for local partners: formal registration, the willingness to undertake innovations in education, flexibility and willingness to work in close partnership, shared vision, mission and working principles, commitment to community participation, and responsiveness to community learning needs.

One interesting challenge they faced in initiating relationships with many local NGOs was the traditional donor-recipient mentality governing the behavior of many local NGOs. The PIE team found that past experience with donor-driven relationships had created mindsets in the local NGOs to expect direction, rather than dialogue, from international donors like PIE. Many were not willing to take risks and innovate with new programs, perhaps because there had been little support for such efforts previously. Also, many local NGOs expected large amounts of funding from an international organization like Save, but PIE was interested in providing capacity-building and seed funds for innovative ideas.

In response to these challenges, the PIE team devoted a good deal of time to building relations, earning trust, and clarifying expectations for the kind of support PIE was prepared to offer. They made it clear that they expected to learn from the local partners, too. They selected those partners who were interested in fostering innovative approaches to education, and concentrated on slowly developing a culture of team spirit, transparency, open communication and mutual understanding. Discussing and establishing common goals and visions was a major part of building a strong foundation for the partnerships.

PIE members reflect that Kangaroo was not one of the local NGOs with a traditional donor-recipient mentality. From the first discussions, they felt they were dealing with like-minded colleagues. In general, PIE found it easier to establish partnerships with new NGOs that had not yet established fixed systems and behaviors towards international NGOs.

Implementing the Partnerships

The PIE team has put relationship building and dialogue at the forefront of carrying out the partnerships. They emphasize mutual understanding, trust, and open communication as the basis of the relationships. Staff from PIE and Kangaroo cite the fact that they feel free to drop in on each others' offices, without appointments, as an indicator of the close and free relations among INGO and NGO. PIE partnerships do employ written proposals, memorandums of understanding, and monitoring and evaluation reports, but the PIE team takes great pains to ensure that these support the goals of the partnerships and do not unduly burden their partners. For example, proposals are discussed in learning-oriented, face-to-face discussions, and reporting requirements are adapted to specific projects rather than only Save's standards. More examples from Kangaroo's experience are presented in the following section on the current arrangements between Kangaroo and Save.

The action research goals of PIE also influence the way in which the partnerships are implemented. Dialogue and mutual learning is encouraged and supported by the PIE team. They like to keep in frequent contact with their partners, learning about the problems and challenges as well as the achievements. Since the overall goal of the project is to promote innovations in education, the pro-learning environment seems absolutely critical to success. Mistakes and problems can be seen as valuable sources of new knowledge, rather than failures to be hidden from view.

The Basic Education Network

In addition to the one-on-one relationships with its partners, PIE has catalyzed the formation of an indigenous network among them and other local NGOs involved in basic education. The network provides a forum for information exchange and policy influence. When they first broached the idea of forming a network, PIE encountered resistance from the NGOs due to negative past experiences. In response, they again worked slowly to build relationships and mutual understanding. For about six months, they brought partners together to exchange information and discuss their common issues and needs, such as the need to influence government policy in education. Then in March, 1998, the NGOs "*took a leap forward*," as the current Chairman describes it, and established an ad hoc committee to plan for the future of the network. At a later meeting, the ad hoc committee was replaced by a permanent governing committee, and an action plan for 1999 was approved. The network has created a forum in a national NGO network for dialogue with the education ministry. PIE has played a support role in linking other international donors to provide funds for the network.

Current Partnership Arrangements

All partnerships may be understood to have two faces. One is the formal and legal face, shaped by national legal systems and institutional practices. The formal dimensions of partnerships between US PVOs and African NGOs usually are embodied in written contracts or agreements and designated roles and responsibilities for inter-organizational interactions. The second face is the informal dimension of partnership, shaped by social and cultural norms, behaviors and expectations. Usually, informal dimensions are expressed in interpersonal relations between individuals involved in the partnership.

Cultures vary in the degree of importance attached to either formal or informal dimensions of partnerships, some observers suggest that one of the key differences between US and African cultures is that Americans generally give more weight to formal agreements, whereas Africans tend to value the relational understandings and interactions more highly (Hall, 1976, Hofstede, 1997). In order to give equal weight to both sets of values, this study examines both the formal and informal dimensions of the partnership between KICYDS and Save the Children US. The informal arrangements are presented first, followed by a discussion of the formal written and institutional arrangements.

Informal Arrangements

The informal relations of the partnership stand out as being the most important arrangements in the relationship to KCYDS, PIE, and the Banyan Tree Foundation. PIE has been very careful to formalize partnership arrangements very lightly, and only after building sound relationships and common understanding. One influence may be that all the key staff in PIE and KCYDS are themselves Ethiopians, sharing a common culture regarding building trusting and mutually beneficial relationships. However, the US donor and expatriate first program manager also supported and encouraged this dimension of the partnership. Core values of mutual trust, open communication and flexibility are predominant.

KCYDS staff highly value PIE's relational approach. They feel that PIE has supported KCYDS in its role as "*a risk taking society*", willing to involve both government and communities in creating relevant new educational programs. "*PIE encouraged such projects, they focus on developing our inner potential. The PIE project environment is supportive. They are trying to release our energy.*" Moreover, they feel free to disagree with PIE's opinions and comments, which has helped to build their confidence in their own programs and strategic directions. In turn, they welcome PIE's way of giving feedback. "*If they show us we're going in the wrong direction they are very caring, very conscientious.*" PIE gives an example of how it interacts with partners like Kangaroo. "*if a partner requests a high amount of salary for its teachers, PIE wouldn't say no, but asks if this will be sustainable when funding by INGO phases out.*"

When asked what images or metaphors they would choose to describe the partnership between KCYDS and PIE, KCYDS staff responded that they liked their symbol, the Kangaroo, for the relationship between PIE and KCYDS, referring to the supportive environment created by the PIE project. They also felt the image of identical twins represented how similar their values, visions, and goals are. A third image suggested by one of the staff represented the shift in power relations to a more balanced relationship between KCYDS and PIE, as compared to traditional donor-recipient relations. "*It is like a modern marriage where the woman is empowered and the man is understanding.*"

The dominant images in PIE reflect the values of equity and cooperation. One is that of a sibling relationship, brother and sister. The other is that of a bicycle, where the two wheels represent two areas of capacity building, the program level and the organization level. Building the long-term capacity of local NGOs to engage in educational programming and policy influence requires movement of both "wheels." PIE and its partners, like KCYDS, are pushing on the pedals through their cooperation in the project.

Formal Arrangements

While the PIE team places primary emphasis on the "soft dimensions" of partnership, such as building relationships and mutual understanding, the way in which they implement the more technical side of the partnerships also reflects their core values and goals. Formal arrangements in the PIE-KCYDS partnership only support and foster the strong interpersonal relationships and atmosphere. The PIE team has found the Banyan Tree to be a very flexible and responsive donor. In turn, they also are flexible and responsive with their partners. Proposals are submitted to PIE by local partners after discussing common visions, goals, and program ideas. PIE team members review the proposals and discuss their comments and suggestions in face-to-face discussions. They are willing to compromise to achieve mutual satisfaction. Shared decisions are made with a view to shared principles, such as sustainability of results, innovation, cost-effectiveness, and community commitment and involvement. As a result, the proposals are viewed as joint proposals by the time they are agreed on by the two organizations.

PIE, encouraged by The Banyan Tree, has moved away from the traditional contract arrangements used by Save to a more flexible approach. For example, when the Banyan Tree reviewed a proposed contract that included an article asserting Save's right to take legal action, they suggested that the article be removed to promote trust and confidence in the local partners. PIE now uses memorandums of understanding (MOUs), rather than contracts, per se, to formalize mutual understanding between itself and its partners. *"The problem with most [contracts] is that they don't fit easily with a free and moving partnership. We expect differences and flexibility [as projects evolve]"* Elements negotiated with partners include focus and scope of the project, amounts of funds and types of technical assistance provided, reporting formats and procedures. To PIE, negotiation means that they are willing to compromise in order to reach mutual agreement for the benefit of the project outcomes. Funding amounts are negotiated in culturally appropriate ways. *"We bargain, African-style,"* says Ato Mengistu, *"together we try to find areas that can be reduced"*

Funds are disbursed quarterly, on the basis of reports received by PIE from partners. PIE encourages its partners to keep the funds in local accounts, close to the communities. Save has an infrastructure of offices in many communities, so they don't find it difficult to stay in contact. PIE also sees the accounting practices as a capacity-building opportunity for the local NGOs. *"we realize there might be some mistakes, but we believe its ok, they can learn"* PIE has no set format for the reports, they are developed according to the projects of each of the partners.

Formal reports supplement the flow of information and communication between PIE and its partners. PIE emphasizes keeping in touch all along the process, and individuals on both sides of the partnerships value the fact that they can drop in each others' offices to discuss how things are going at any time, without formal appointments. It is an indicator of the team spirit and mutual trust that characterizes these partnerships.

KCYDS describes their expectations of PIE. *"They assist us technically and financially, with capacity-building and funding. They provide support and information sharing. Now we have a pilot project, if we want to escalate we will need new funds"* Similarly, they are very clear that PIE expects KCYDS to fulfill its immediate and longer-term goals. *"To practice what we have envisaged, to document success and failure, to participate in monthly reviews and meetings, to participate in BEN and actively influence policy, and in the near future, to expand to the national scope, perhaps even to substitute PIE"* To date, in addition to support and dialogue, PIE has provided about \$15,000 in funds, and technical assistance in the form of teacher training.

PIE does not see itself as the only donor or source of resources for its partners. One-third of Kangaroo's resources, for example, are covered by its own in-kind contributions and community participation. PIE has taken the unusual step for a donor of assisting KCYDS and other local partners to write proposals for other donors and projects. They have even gone so far as to accompany KCYDS and others to initial project meetings. *"International donors tend to be more willing to listen to other international donors,"* reflects the PIE project manager. PIE sees these efforts as part of their capacity-building mission with the local NGOs.

Systemic Influences on the Partnership

Survey research and formal consultations with US PVOs and southern NGOs indicated that partnership relations are influenced by system factors larger than individual behavior and attitudes (Leach, Brown and Kalegaonkar, 1998, PRIA, 1998). Inside organizations, strategic plans, organization-wide policies, and inter-departmental relations can shape the actions and choices of representatives involved in partnerships. Externally, other actors such as governments, donors, and communities can exert pressure

on individual partners to respond to new demands. Social and natural disasters can hinder the achievement of program targets, as well as present new pressures and demands. US PVOs, in particular, said that one of their major challenges was operating between two diverse environments: southern NGOs and their communities on the one hand, and US donors, board and staff, on the other (Leach, Brown and Kalegaonkar, 1998, PRIA, 1998). This section of the case study examines the major internal and external influences reported by PIE and KCYDS to be influencing their partnership.

Organizational Influences

PIE, as a unique project within Save, has benefited from a supportive environment within the larger Field Office for its goals and style of operating. PIE staff observe that the Country Directors have been very supportive of the project. A former country director helped to get the project going, and the current director has continued to provide support. He has even gone to the extent of intervening on behalf of the project with the accounts office. This support has given the project the autonomy necessary to try new arrangements and styles of relating to local partners, without fearing potentially negative consequences. The first project manager was quoted as saying that she liked the PIE project because it was so much less bureaucratic than Save's traditional way of operating.

The current PIE project manager reflects that their relational, process-oriented, approach takes a lot of staff time. "*Partnership can be expensive,*" he says. In some organizations, this realization would be a serious strike against the project, but in Save, there is an environment to support experimentation. This factor will be one among many considered when assessing and evaluating the benefits and costs of the PIE project approach.

Within KCYDS, the major influence from the organization is its lack of capacity to achieve its visionary goals. Many of its members are experienced professionals, with the individual expertise to make significant contributions. Yet as a new local NGO in its formative stage, it lacks many basics, such as its own computer, typewriter, vehicles, etc. Even its office space has yet to be stabilized.

Environmental Influences

The positive influence of the donor, The Banyan Tree Foundation, has been emphasized above. The supportive environment for initiative from partners created by Banyan Tree and PIE is extended and created by PIE and its partners. A visit to a community school in one of KCYDS' programs indicated that they engage with community members in similar ways, extending the partnership "chain" from the donor to the community. Community members donated land for the school, and an elected committee manages it. "Teachers" are considered facilitators, not teachers, emphasizing the active role of the children in learning. The coming together of like-minded partners, from the community to the donor, appears to have catalyzed quick and innovative approaches to international development partnerships in education. From PIE's perspective, the Banyan Tree Foundation's has been critical: "*if we had to follow USAID criteria and procedures it would never work*" observe the staff.

The standard practices of other donors within Ethiopia have had a restraining impact on PIE's attempts to initiate partnerships. At the organizational level, PIE discovered that many local NGOs' internal systems were developed to respond to the needs of their primary donor. They were not flexible enough to allow them to relate to new donors or partners, such as PIE. They found it easier to start with new local NGOs, whose systems were not already well developed, like KCYDS.

At the societal level, the dominant mentality of donor-recipient relations among local NGOs and international resource-providing partners has also provided a serious challenge. PIE is a change-agent among the Ethiopian donor-NGO community, and as such continually faces the need to work with changing people's beliefs and attitudes, in addition to the more concrete work of funding and capacity building. This kind of change can take a long time, and will be facilitated as other donors and local

NGOs participate in re-evaluating their own ideas and practices. Given their historical experience, local NGOs may not easily believe they have the autonomy and scope which PIE encourages. Such past experience is reflected in the observation made by another local partner, "*These donors want us to call them partners*". PIE's thoughtful and gradual approach to building mutual confidence and trust contributes to the change in mentality necessary for the success of their partnership approach.

The history and attitudes of the Ethiopian communities, too, are an important influence affecting the partnership. PIE and local partners emphasize community-based education programs, yet because of their history, Ethiopian communities can be suspicious of outsiders and resistant to participate in new activities. A measure of Kangaroo's success is that it chose to begin its work in a very marginalized area with highly suspicious community members. Through a process of dialogue and trust building with the community and government, they were able to create an environment whereby the community's interests and resources were mobilized to start new school programs.

Finally, the Ethiopian government is an extremely important actor in the external environment. In general, the government has yet to provide an enabling environment for NGOs. It is perceived by many in the NGO sector to operate in very bureaucratic ways that make it difficult for NGOs to play their roles. Efforts are underway in some NGO forums to develop more dialogue and stronger relationships with the government. PIE, KCYDS, and other partners consider the government a major force in education, and see the role of local NGOs as complementing the government services. From PIE's perspective government policy in the education field may be more favorable than in other sectors. In order to create a positive relationship with the government, in which their innovations would be welcomed and have a wider impact, PIE has encouraged its partners to take initiatives at both policy and program levels. At the policy level, they created the Basic Education Network, as described above, and at the program level, KCYDS and other partners have involved government officials to promote positive relations.

Value of The Partnership: Achievements, Future Hopes and Challenges

Both PIE and Kangaroo value the partnership highly. From Kangaroo's perspective, PIE is supporting its development into the kind of local NGO it has envisioned. It may be a young NGO, with a long way to go to achieve the kinds of programs and impacts on education it envisions, but the partnership with PIE has provided a supportive environment in which it can build a strong foundation for future growth. Unlike many Ethiopian NGOs, who say their mission and autonomy are compromised by partnering with Northern NGOs, Kangaroo has a partner who supports their initiatives and ideas. "*We are in this position because they supported us for the project priorities budgets and training*"

Results are found both in the programs and in Kangaroo's capacity. Program benefits include the new schools, educational programs, trained teachers, and new models of designing and delivering basic education. Capacity benefits include the strong mission and strategic focus of KCYDS, as well as the confidence and skills to manage a local NGO, including proposal-writing, computer training, fund-raising, report-writing, etc. Kangaroo's development as a local NGO may well be "jump-started", the confidence and skills they have gained through dialogue with PIE and the other BEN members could mean they don't have to learn them "the hard way", through long years of experience.

PIE is pleased with the results of the project to date. "*It is surprising, it really moved more than we expected. Now local NGOs are focusing on innovations*". Many indicators of success are evident, even after only two years of the project.

- Several communities without formal schools now have self-managed schools,

- New models of education that are low-cost, accessible, and culturally appropriate have been developed and are available to government and other agencies,
- Several programs with increased enrollment of girls have been initiated,
- Drop-out rates have begun to fall, due to the relevance of the new models,
- Communities are involved in the development, resourcing and management of the new schools,
- Local NGOs are building their capacity (teacher training, proposal writing, fund raising, computer training) and confidence as leaders in the education field, and
- The Basic Education Network of local NGOs has been initiated and become self-managing, received financial resources from other INGOs, and begun to influence government policy

The main challenges for the partnership relate to its goals of long-term sustainable results in the improvement of access to quality education for Ethiopians in addition to the formal system. Sustainability will depend to a great extent on the ability of the local organizations to mobilize resources to support their programs, and to further develop their leadership role in their interactions with the Ethiopian government and international agencies involved in the education sector.

Resource Mobilization

Looking at KCYDS, in order to expand its programs, capacity building, and networking activities to meet the existing needs, it will have to find additional financial resources. Even with its focus on low-cost programming, capacity building and networking, significant new financial resources are required. PIE's current project length is for 3 years, from KCYDS' perspective, 5 would provide them more of an opportunity to build their foundation. They still need to build their organizational systems to support their programs.

Admittedly, PIE's funds are small. The seed fund approach is suitable for fostering innovations and cost-effective strategies. It does not foster dependence on the donor. However, when the local NGOs like KCYDS turn to replicating and scaling up their innovative models, larger sources of funds will be necessary to have the kind of impact they desire. Resource scarcity is, of course, a problem that all development partnerships face. PIE's approach of facilitating low-cost program models, participatory approaches which build on community and volunteer resources, and strengthening fund-raising capacity appears to be a productive strategy for dealing with a challenging environment.

Leadership Role of Local NGOs and CBOs

Many local NGOs in Ethiopia feel that their missions and autonomy are threatened when they cooperate with INGOs. In contrast, PIE has created an environment which supports NGOs and CBOs to carry out their missions. Yet questions remain which can only be answered in the future. Will the three-year project have been enough to support the development of an autonomous local NGO sector in education? Will the local civil society organizations and their network survive and prosper, once the supportive environment of the PIE project ends? Will traditional donor practices force the local NGOs to trade off their voice and autonomy in exchange for needed financial resources? There will be many factors and forces that influence the long-term outcome of the project, but given its focus on sustainable results, it would be well-worth the effort of keeping track of the PIE partners as they continue their work and build from the foundation of the project.

If they are successful, PIE will have helped catalyze and support the emergence of an indigenous civil society based sector in Ethiopia committed to promoting accessible and relevant educational opportunities for disadvantaged children and adults. Considering the overall shift in the international development field towards valuing these kinds of results, it be and interesting and useful model for Save and other INGOs to replicate.