Community Collaboration in Development Work with Young People: Perspectives from Zambian Communities

Abstract

Despite its recognised importance, studies of collaboration within specific communities in the Global South are rare. This paper examines the purposes and processes of collaboration between organisations undertaking development work with young people in two communities in Lusaka, Zambia. Interviewees recognised the need for collaboration given the limitations of existing provision and the fragmented organisational context. Existing collaboration was commonly orientated towards information sharing and joint provision rather than broader co-ordinated planning. Building awareness and understanding across organisations were viewed as key processes in developing collaboration. To enhance collaboration between organisations, it is suggested that inclusive community forums be instigated.

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Introduction

That there is a need for organisations involved in development efforts to work together effectively is a longstanding truism recognised by academics, policy makers and practitioners alike. For example, in relation to the development issue and country that is the focus of this paper, the recognition that 'child and youth development cuts across all sectors' was followed in the 5th Zambian National Development Plan (Republic of Zambia, 2006, p223) by a commitment that:

> *Public institutions at provincial, district, central and local government levels, NGOs, cooperating partners, CBOs, FBOs, the private sector, various youth organisations, organisations of people with disability, churches, youth and communities will work together with a common purpose, avoiding duplication, and promoting rational use of the available resources.*

While such rhetoric is commonplace, the terminology utilised in both policy and academic literature is notoriously slippery. The same National Development Plan (2006) advocates the need to build or strengthen 'partnerships' and, although academics have frequently questioned this term, a multitude of research studies have focused on specific 'partnerships' between international donors and organisations within countries in the Global South. Research studies that have examined efforts to work together amongst indigenous and in-country organisations are far rarer. A notable exception is a series of papers by Batley and colleagues (2008) derived from a research project that examined 'collaboration' between governments and non-state providers of education services. However, Batley's

research project concerned collaboration at the level of national and organisational policy and there are far fewer studies of collaboration within specific communities (Krishna, 2003).

In addressing this lacuna, the research presented in this paper examines collaboration amongst organisations working with young people two communities, Chawama and Kamwala in the Zambian capital, Lusaka. Collaboration was conceived broadly as 'working across organisational boundaries towards some positive end' (Huxham & Vangen, 2005, p4). For the purposes of this paper, this definition differentiates collaboration as a practice, albeit one that may be associated with particular organisational arrangements, 'partnership' being one such arrangement and 'networks' potentially another (Glasbergen, 2007; O'Sullivan, 2010). Huxham and Vangen's (2005) definition also leaves open what may be desired as the 'positive ends' of collaboration and, in doing so, gives rise to the two particular issues that are the focus of this paper.

First, the paper examines perspectives regarding the 'positive ends', or purposes, of collaboration in Chawama and Kamwala. Views on both the desired purposes and the extent to which these have or have not been practically addressed will be considered. Second, the processes by which collaboration is and can be developed towards these ends will be examined. This will be studied, not through a single example of collaboration, but through perspectives on different collaborative practices as experienced by organisations and their representatives in Chamawa and Kamwala. Collectively, the findings on these two issues will be used to suggest,

in the conclusion of this paper, how practices of collaboration could possibly be developed.

Literature Review

This section provides an overview of the available literature relevant to the issues that are the focus of this paper. While there are many studies related to collaboration within the development literature, more conceptual or overarching perspectives on collaboration are notable by their absence. As such, some sources not necessarily associated with development in the Global South will be utilised where they offer more comprehensive appraisals of collaboration than would otherwise be available. Similarly, literature on identified with topics, such as partnership, with close alignment to collaboration will be integrated where appropriate.

As suggested more generally in the previous paragraph, overviews of the potential purposes of collaboration are scarce. In their introductory chapter of their influential book, '*Managing to Collaborate*', Huxham & Vangen (2005) identify that collaboration could be orientated towards learning, accessing or sharing resources, sharing risk, achieving more efficient provision of services and improving co-ordination across organisations. It is notable that there is an implicit recognition in Huxham & Vangen's (2005) brief overview that different organisational arrangements may be better suited to the achievement of the various identified collaborative purposes. Examples from the development literature also identify the commonality (or absence) of such collaborative purposes. Glasbergen (2007) suggests that collaboration orientated towards 'encourag[ing] debate, sharing of experiences and development of new

ideas' are widespread. Conversely, Rose (2010) recognises a lack of collaboration orientated towards co-ordinated planning. Krishna (2003) likewise suggests collaboration has not often been directed towards the scaling up of initiatives, a purpose somewhat different to those Huxham & Vangen (2005) identify.

Despite some recognition of the variety of collaborative purposes, there are even fewer contributions in the development literature that offer any schema for analysing such purposes. Interestingly, O'Sullivan (2010) and Lindsey & Banda (2011), from a separate research study previously undertaken in Zambia, both propose similar spectrums of collaborative purposes. Information sharing, termed 'low collaboration' by O'Sullivan (2010), lies at one extreme of both of the cited spectrums of purposes. O'Sullivan's (2010, p736) 'high collaboration' is characterised by 'institutional support or joint implementation'. Alternatively, purposes that were of 'broad strategic importance', for example policy development and co-ordination, existed at the second extreme of Lindsey & Banda's (2011, p97) spectrum. Notably, Lindsey & Banda (2011) also deemed it not possible to order a variety of other collaborative purposes, including joint provision, between their two stated extremes.

A number of authors recognise that processes of collaboration may develop over time (e.g. Glasbergen, 2007; Franklin, 2009; O'Sullivan, 2010) and suggestions that collaboration may progress through a sequential series of stages or phases are common. For example, writing on sustainable development, Gray (2007) suggests collaboration progresses through four phases that she terms problem setting, direction setting, implementation and institutionalisation. For Gray (2007, p34), the analytical benefits of such phase- or stage-based models is that they help 'identify

key challenges that arise and offer a suggested order for responding to them'. Nevertheless, the identification by Batley (2008) that collaboration may progress in different sequences in the Global South and North suggests significant caution must be exercised in adopting any *a priori* model of collaboration development.

Bearing in mind this warning, it remains possible to identify some of the processes of collaboration development. A prerequisite for collaboration is the identification of potential organisations to collaborate with (Gray, 2007) and some authors also suggest that a process of exploration of their 'motivations and interests' is necessary before collaboration can begin (Franklin, 2009, p791; Glasbergen, 2007). Similarly, Gray (2007) suggests a process of developing a shared understanding of both the aims and operation of collaboration is important at any early stage. Furthermore, authors identify the importance of forming appropriate structures for collaboration (Franklin, 2009), formalising collaborative arrangements (Glasbergen, 2007) and developing procedures for transparency (Gray, 2007). The significance of developing trust is also commonly highlighted although there are different perspectives as to when this needs to occur with Glasbergen (2007) suggesting trust must be developed prior to developing shared understanding whereas Franklin (2009, p798) suggests that organisations must be prepared to take a 'leap of faith' in commencing collaboration. Across these literature sources, less consideration is given to processes through collaborative implementation and, while it is recognised that collaboration could breakdown at different points (Gray, 2007; Franklin, 2009), the processes involved in any breakdown are often left unexplored.

Research Methods

Specific issues of collaboration were examined as part of a broader study which aimed to understand and, through dissemination, contribute to development work with young people within the two case study communities in Lusaka. The research was supported by Zambian colleagues from two indigenous NGOs, Edusport and Sport in Action. It was on the advice of these colleagues that the two case study communities were chosen as exemplifying cases that offered contexts in which approaches to collaboration and development work with young people could be studied.

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with the adult representatives of organisations undertaking development work with youth people in Kamwala and Chawama. These interviewees were identified through a preliminary mapping exercise undertaken by Zambian colleagues, recommendations from interviewees themselves and through identifying organisations as they worked within the communities. Zambian colleagues' input into undertaking interviews was also valuable in investigating issues including perspectives on the local community, approaches to development work with young people and collaboration between development-orientated organisations. In total, twenty and seventeen interviews were undertaken in Chawama and Kamawa respectively involving a total of over sixty individuals across both communities. Twelve of the thirty seven interviews involved female participants although it is not possible to assert whether this representation was reflective of the proportion of females working with organisations involved in youth and community work in the two communities. Interviews lasted

between 15 and 90 minutes and were recorded in full where interviewees gave permission to do so.

Interview transcripts were analysed through an iterative and inductive process. Informal discussions between the researcher and Zambian colleagues regarding emerging themes occurred as data collection was undertaken in Zambia. Formal analysis of transcribed interviews consisted of iteratively and recursively identifying themes and sub-themes within the data on each case study, undertaking cross-case comparison and relating these themes to the broader contextualising literature. Initial findings were shared with Zambian colleagues and interviewees through video presentations at workshops organised in the two case study communities. Importantly, given the focus on understanding local perspectives, discussions from the workshops regarding the relevance of the authors' interpretations were subsequently fed back into the analysis process.

Community & Organisational Context

A description of the community and organisational context in Chawama and Kamwala, drawn from the perspectives of interviewees, is necessary in order to set the scene for the subsequent examination of the purposes and processes of collaboration. Interviewees' and official estimates of the population of Chawama ranged from 60,000 to 170,000 with residential accommodation being densely packed. Problems of deprivation, unemployment and associated issues were strongly evident in Chawama and particularly affected the high proportion of young people in the community. By contrast, the population within the second case study

community, Kamwala, was relatively middle-class by Zambian standards and the area was less densely populated with an overall population estimated at 25,000. Levels of formal employment were higher in Kamwala and parents and guardians were more likely to be able to afford school fees for their children. Nevertheless, issues of HIV / AIDS infection, alcohol and drug abuse, gender inequality and, more generally, lack of opportunity affected both Kamwala and Chawama.

Interviewees suggested that existing provision by the variety of the organisations present in both communities did not manage to meet the needs of all young people. Comments about the insufficiency of provision for young people were particularly common in Chawama and included the following comments by different (male) church leaders:

> *When you [are] looking at the situation of the youths in Chawama, what is being done for them is very little. Maybe 10% or less. We need more for the youths in Chawama here.*

> *The young people they still need more, whatever we are trying to put in, I know it is not sufficient, but they still need more.*

Specific gaps in provision identified were in the availability of education, sporting and general recreational opportunities as well as services for specific groups of young people, notably girls and older youths.

Although many of these identified problems were recognised in the National Development Plan (Republic of Zambia, 2006), government provision for young people in Chawama and Kamwala was confined to the limited number of government schools in each community. In order to increase governmental reach in local communities, Lusaka District Council had instigated Ward Development Committees across the city including in Chawama and Kamwala. However, by the account of the two chairs of the Chawama and Kamwala Ward Development Committees, development work with young people was not the most immediate of priorities for government when infrastructure issues of water supply, drainage and health care had more prominent calls on scarce resources. As a result, many community members involved in working with young people were despondent at the limited government provision of both schools and other services within their communities.

In common with the trend widely identified in a number of different contexts, the inadequacy of government provision in Chawama and Kamwala had resulted in the emergence of a large number of, primarily, civil society organisations orientated towards work with young people. Although private schools were more common in Kamwala, in Chawama especially a large number of community schools had been instigated to cater for young people who were not educated in government schools. Only a limited number of large-scale NGOs were identified as operating in both communities. Instead, smaller community-based organisations (CBOs) instigated by local residents were more common, especially in Chawama. By contrast, this community-focus was slightly less common in Kamwala as a number of organisations located in the community provided services for young people living in a variety of locations in Lusaka. For many of these organisations in both communities,

providing sport and other recreational activities for young people was a method by which a range of development issues could be addressed. As well as sport-for-development organisations being prominent in both communities, churches and other faith-based organisations in both Kawmala and Chawama also often had youth sections that provided recreational, as well as educational and spiritual, activities.

In common with educational services in a number of countries in the Global South (Rose, 2010), the limited government provision and multiplicity of civil society organisations meant that development work with young people in Chawama and Kamwala was fragmented. It was unsurprising that, particularly in Chawama, interviewees highlighted problems of competition and duplication between organisations. For example, there was evidence of organisations targeting the same children with similar services or competing over which organisation provided similar sporting activities in particular schools.

Purposes of Collaboration

The first of the two main issues addressed by this paper, namely the purposes of collaboration, will be considered in this section. Following the literature review, one focus of this section will be interviewees' perspectives regarding the variety of purposes to which collaboration could potentially be orientated in both communities. The extent to which interviewees identified that these purposes were addressed through collaboration will also be analysed. Throughout the section, some of the conditions that (would) enable collaboration to address desired purposes will be considered.

Firstly, it is important to note the commonality with which interviewees generally identified collaboration as important in order to address the issues facing young people in the communities and the problems of fragmentation identified in the previous section. The following quotes exemplified the widespread belief that collaboration was a potentially beneficial practice:

There are certain just challenges [that] you cannot meet when you work in isolation. … you know you just need to work together to meet some of these challenges. (Male, Representative of a faith-based organisation, Chawama)

I believe in teamwork and I believe every member of a team will have to contribute something to the team for it to work. So it starts with the individual skills, then when you bring those individual skills together, you bring up something, because you cannot be good at everything… As they say, two are better than one. (Male, Manager, Kamwala-based NGO)

Moving on to more specific purposes, the importance of collaboration for sharing information and knowledge was stated by interviewees from both communities. This sharing allowed the individual organisations involved to gain ideas that would develop their own approaches and practices. This purpose is illustrated in the following indicative comment by a (male) church leader from Chawama:

You have to learn from other people as well. You don't have to be closed up and do your own thing. It is important also that we broaden ourselves by interacting with other people, other organisations.

In Kamwala, information sharing mainly appeared to occur when collaboration was undertaken on a small scale involving two different organisations. However, it was commonly recognised that information sharing was possible and would be enhanced in local workshops, meetings and formal networks which could bring together a larger number of organisations to collaborate. In practice, the extent to which such forums for collaboration existed and functioned effectively and regularly was questionable. In Chawama, interviewees highlighted the presence of a Children and Vulnerable Orphans Committee which included a variety of organisations from the community that addressed this common target group. No such networks were identified within Kamwala and, while some Chawama interviewees spoke positively of the Children and Vulnerable Orphans Committee, another suggested that 'it's there on paper, but it's not functioning'. Some specific types of organisations from Chawama and Kamwala were members of wider networks, such as Zambia National Education Coalition but, due to these networks' thematic rather than geographic focus, they were unlikely to provide opportunities for collaboration and information sharing across organisations from specific communities.

Capacity building and expertise sharing were other potential benefits that interviewees recognised could come from more formal instances of collaboration. Within Chawama, examples were identified in which organisations from the community with expertise in youth development and sport coaching delivered

training workshops attended by staff and volunteers from other organisations. More commonly, however, training for organisations in both Chawama and Kamwala was mainly provided by organisations from outwith these communities. NGOs operating across Zambian communities provided a number of training opportunities accessed by Chawama and Kamwala-based organisations. Expertise sharing also occurred on a more long-term basis through collaboration between specific organisations from within and beyond the two communities. For example, two Chawama CBOs had formed relationships with an international NGO and a private Zambian company respectively whereby expert advice on officially registering as an organisation and other legal issues were provided.

More commonly, collaboration undertaken within both communities was orientated towards the joint provision of activities or opportunities for young people. This type of 'joint implementation' (O'Sullivan, 2010) was often undertaken on a small scale through collaboration between two, or a similarly limited number of, organisations. Interviewees valued collaboration that enabled joint provision for a variety of reasons. Some education, sporting and other recreational activities would not have been provided but for collaboration between different groups of schools or churches. This was especially the case in terms of competitive sporting fixtures, for example. Alternatively collaboration enabled organisations orientated towards different issues or with different skills to enhance activities for young people. For example, a (male) representative of a sport-orientated CBO in Chawama stated that:

> *The way our programmes are is that we cannot do everything on our own. We*
>
> *rely on the partners. So, with the problem that we maybe want to address, we*

go to a specific organisation that maybe would be able to assist us in that area.

Similarly, organisations such as schools or churches were able to provide a greater range of opportunities to their young people through collaborating with organisations that had a more specific focus such as sport, art or aspects of life skills education.

Other potential collaborative purposes identified by interviewees, and commonly referred to in the literature, were less commonly realised within both Chawama and Kamwala. Although some schools and CBOs within these communities acquired resources from national and international organisations, collaboration orientated towards pooling or sharing of resources within the communities was rare. Given the limited financial resources available in the two communities, a number of interviewees, such as one (male) representative of an organisation in Kamwala, highlighted the difficulty of sharing financial resources:

What comes in between is always a question of money, funding. When you organise now, who pays for what? That, it's quite challenging to overcome.

Interviewees only identified examples of sharing non-depreciable or non-consumable resources such as providing access to sporting facilities and equipment and, in one case, sharing of books between schools.

Similarly, collaboration orientated towards co-ordinated planning across different organisations was rare. Amongst groups of similar organisations, one of the few

examples of collaborative co-ordination was the organisation of sporting activities across a number of different community schools led by the Chawama division of a sport-orientated NGO. However, interviewees recognised that such an example was exceptional and the limited amount of co-ordinated planning between organisations was a problem not only in the case studies but also elsewhere in Zambia. For example, a (male) representative of a NGO based in Kamwala identified:

> *Coordination, it is not there, not a bit! And that is a weakness, especially in Zambia. There is a lot of duplication of efforts because of lack of coordination. You will find they do the same work which the other person is doing in Zambia.*

A desire for greater co-ordinated planning between organisations was widely recognised by interviewees, with the following illustrative comment provided by a (male) leader from a Chawama CBO:

> *Coordination, it's very, very important, because if people are not coordinated, they will be just doing wrong things. There is a need to coordinate.*

Interviewees recognised that, unlike joint provision, co-ordination required collaboration between a wide range of organisations. As such, collaborative networks such as the Children and Vulnerable Orphans Committee offered the potential for co-ordinated planning but, as stated previously, such networks were rare and the effectiveness of the Committee was disputed. Furthermore, there were strong concerns as to whether any single organisation had the capacity and status to

provide the leadership required for effective co-ordination. The following response by a (male) interviewee from a Kamwala-based NGO reflected a widely held perspective that government should take a greater role within the communities:

> *Actually the Government is supposed to provide co-ordination. There is a Ministry responsible for youth. … within that there is the Co-ordination Youth Working Council … and that is supposed to be providing the co-ordination at all levels. … [but] the Government always give you excuses; no we don't have the capacity, we don't have money to put into that.*

That this lack of government leadership for collaboration is not an isolated or unique issue is emphasised by Batley (2006) who notes similar findings in education services more generally in six African and Asian countries.

As a result, in Chawama especially, there was a strong feeling on the part of a number of interviewees that efforts towards developing co-ordination through community-wide collaboration should be led from the community itself. Discussing this, a (female) interviewee from an NGO operating in Chawama commented:

> *I think it's up to us as a community to come up something, because that's our community. The Government doesn't stay in our community and we are the people that know the needs around our communities. So I think it has to start with us, as NGO and as CBO, we start forming our close communities and then work on that and see.*

This final quote gives an indication of the processes through which improved collaboration within communities may develop. It is to further consideration of these developmental processes that the paper now turns in the following section.

Processes of Collaboration Development

A number of processes important to the development of collaboration were identified from interviewees' perspectives and experiences. Processes of developing awareness, understanding, trust, shared goals, appropriate working practices as well as the potential for lasting collaboration will be considered in this section. Where the evidence supports it, the extent to which these processes could be considered sequential will be indicated. Nevertheless, concerns were raised in the literature review regarding the applicability of a phase- or stage-based model of collaboration development. As such, the findings will not be presented in particular sub-sections as this could imply a degree of linearity in collaboration development which the data does not necessarily support.

As identified in the literature review, a prerequisite of collaboration is awareness of other organisations that could be potential collaborators. Within the two communities, this awareness was largely dependent on the personal connections of organisational representatives. A number of interviewees described their knowledge of organisations in their community in terms of an 'extended family' and these types of relationships were recognised as being particularly important in commencing collaboration by one (male) interviewee from a Kamwala NGO:

And I think most partnerships, if we look at our history, would have started through a similar setup, like the extended family system, where within the family we have got to tap into the other person.

As well as the personal connections of organisational staff or volunteers, interviewees also provided examples whereby young people, who had been involved in activities or services delivered by different organisations, made the initial connections from which collaboration between these organisations emerged.

Franklin (2009) cites differences between 'introvert' and 'extrovert' organisations with regard to collaboration and such a division could broadly be identified amongst the organisations in Chawama and Kamwala. Community schools and CBOs tended to be most 'extrovert' in having a strong ethos towards collaboration and being proactive in seeking out and contacting prospective collaborators. Conversely, it was evident that the broader institutional framework of government schools constrained them to a reactive approach of waiting for contact from potential collaborators. Many churches were similarly 'introverted' and, while rhetorically positive about collaboration, also demonstrated a reactive approach with the following comment from a (male) church representative from Chawama being typical:

We would appreciate [collaboration] ... not yet but if someone comes aboard we would appreciate that.

Beyond awareness, barriers of understanding often needed to be overcome before collaboration orientated towards joint provision commenced. Representatives of both

sports and arts organisations mentioned the importance of potential collaborators, and particularly schools, understanding the value of their particular approach to address wider youth development issues. For example, a (male) representative of an arts and drama CBO in Chawama indicated:

> *Some of the teachers who know about art, they maybe embrace that, they regard us to be a very good tool for them as a school. But for some, for some schools which doesn't [sic] understand the importance, the impact of art for the community, they regard that thing to be something else.*

From the alternative perspective of a (female) representative of a Chawama school which was approached by potential collaborators, the issue of understanding was similarly important:

> *But with these other organisations, we don't have the full information. They just come here, now [they] want to talk to your pupils, [they] want to educate them on this one, but we don't even know exactly what they are doing, so that is a problem.*

However, understanding the orientation of organisations could also preclude the possibility of collaboration. Churches and CBOs or NGOs often identified that it was impossible to collaborate when there was a clash between faith-based and secular approaches to addressing issues such as HIV / AIDS as demonstrated in the following quotation from a (male) representative of a secular organisation:

In most of the, especially the religious schools, there is quite, more or less like a barrier because of the religious background and things like that. The cultural [aspects of our programmes] there are some of the schools, especially those who are religious based, especially religious based, some of them don't accept it.

Trust between organisations was a further significant issue in both communities affecting processes through the instigation and implementation of collaboration. The following quote was representative of the views of a number of interviewees who raised concerns that other organisations had been created to serve the interest of the founders rather than the young people they purported to benefit:

We actually discovered that some people are not putting the interest of the community first. They put their own interest first, and that, it cannot succeed … if that problem is not sorted out. (Female Representative of a Chawama-based NGO)

The resulting difficulty of identifying trustworthy organisations to collaborate with was evidenced by the following statements by (male) representatives of two Kamwala-based organisations:

We try to organise together partnership. Now that's very challenging. That's very challenging mainly because of the dishonesty of many organisations. … because they know they don't do [the] job. … and they just squander money or things like that.

So I think partnerships have been affected with familiarity. How well do I

know this person? Am I able to trust this person? Yes. I think that has

affected in the way partnerships come up.

In the instigation of any type of collaboration, issues of understanding and trust were particularly 'discouraging' for smaller and newer organisations. Without a lengthy and understood history, such organisations faced challenges being viewed as trustworthy by potential collaborators. In terms of collaboration that went beyond simple information sharing, smaller and newer organisations often also lacked significant and stable resources which were required for collaboration, as evidenced by the alterative viewpoint of a (male) representative of more established Kamwala-based NGO:

It has been difficult to work with, or to come up with, partnerships with people

that are not at the same level that you are. An example would be

infrastructure. We realise that we have an infrastructure at [organisation

name] and the people, who want to come on board do not have an

infrastructure. So we'd feel that we are to be used, as [organisation name].

Yes. And that is a challenge in coming up with a partnership.

Even if the barriers identified previously were overcome, a more proactive process of identifying mutually shared goals needed to be undertaken before implementation of collaborative activities between small groups of organisations could be undertaken. The goals of different partners did not need to be entirely the same but, as the

following quotes from (male) representatives of two Kamwala-based NGOs demonstrate, required to be sufficiently aligned to allow potential mutual benefit:

> *It's not the same purpose, but I think they compliment towards our goal. For us to come together with [name of sporting organisation], we share the same ideal, and in a particular arena.*

> *There should be mutual interests and understanding on the agenda which [we] have partnered on. And for me that's actually more important than other areas, although they are quite important, but if the other partner don't have mutual interest, they won't actually support the projects.*

Once instigated, the achievement of benefits and mutual goals was important for continued collaboration. A number of interviewees spoke of the ultimate and common goal of collaboration being improvement in the lives of young people. However, in specific collaborations, the potential importance of organisations deriving different benefits from involvement was recognised. The following comment by a (female) interviewee from a Chawama-based NGO represented perhaps an extreme case in which individual organisational benefits were required for collaboration:

> *We work with schools [but] sometimes the challenge is that they also need … to benefit in a way. So sometimes we also give them some incentive, like for example we will give them like bowls or dusters, you know to encourage them*

… so that we can work together with them. Different organisations also need different incentives.

In continuing collaboration with community organisations, encouraging transparency and accountability was also identified as important given the difficulties related to trust identified earlier. These issues were discussed in interviews as well as in subsequent workshops and were captured effectively by a (male) interviewee from a Kamwala-based NGO:

[Organisations] should be transparent. They should be accountable. Yeah, they should be transparent in the way that relationship is being managed. Okay, the other partner should know what the other partner is doing.

This quote speaks of a suggestion for greater formality in relationships as collaboration progresses. Collaborative practices that involved a small number of organisations were largely conducted on an informal basis underpinned by verbal communication and personal relationships. However, some interviewees did recognise the potential benefit of formalising collaborative arrangements with other organisations through drawing up Memoranda of Understanding or similar documentation. For example, one (female) interviewee who represented an NGO in Chawama commented:

The benefit is that the relationship is formal. It's formalised. Such that it's like we know each other very well now and when there is a problem we are able

> *to co-ordinate and … help have that problem sorted out. And where we don't*
>
> *have a Memorandum, it's difficult to work with them.*

Interviewees felt that, through formalising collaborative arrangements, the commitment of different organisations was clarified and having documentation to refer to helped to address problems as they arose. Despite these largely positive views, very few formalised collaborations existed within either community and, as identified elsewhere by Batley (2008), it was recognised by different interviewees that formalisation was only likely to be undertaken when collaboration was well established and had been ongoing for an extended period of time.

However, much collaboration that was related to joint provision was undertaken irregularly according to the needs of specific programmes and thus did not have the continuity of highly regarded and formalised relationships. Interviewees also provided examples of small scale collaborations which had been discontinued often due to challenging circumstances, such as funding difficulties, faced by one or other of the organisations. As one (male) interviewee commented: 'when they find that they cannot make it, [other organisations] sometimes withdraw quietly'. In these cases, interviewees suggested that the collaboration could be re-established when circumstances improved as long as the trust between organisations had not been broken.

Conclusions

This concluding section will firstly consider ways in which the findings from the Chawama and Kamwala case studies supplement existing understanding of community collaboration. These findings do support those of Batley (2006), Rosenberg et al. (2008) and others in demonstrating the importance that collaboration has in the direct implementation of development initiatives across whole communities as well as at national levels and in specific programmes. In part, the recognised need for collaboration could be attributed to the fragmentation of, mainly, civil society organisations that had arisen due to the limited government provision for young people in Chawama and Kamwala. Perhaps more implicitly, the community ethos of Chawama-based organisations in particular meant that their representatives had a strong recognition of a 'common cause' which was best served by working together rather than in isolation.

It is important to identify the diversity of collaborative forms and the purposes to which specific collaborations were directed in the two communities, an issue that is rarely addressed explicitly in the limited literature on local collaboration. The findings from this research extend Franklin's (2009) contention that there is no single, most appropriate collaborative form through demonstrating that particular collaborative forms may be best suited to achieving certain outcomes. For example, the efficacy of information sharing may be enhanced within broader collaborative networks, whilst collaborative delivery of development activities may be least challenging in collaborations between a smaller number of organisations. These are, as yet, merely indicative suggestions that would benefit from being supported by a greater weight of evidence. In future research on collaborative purposes and forms, O'Sullivan's (2010) distinction between low and high-level collaboration may be useful if a little

simplistic. Instead, as the author has suggested elsewhere (Lindsey & Banda, 2011), it may be more appropriate to consider potential collaborative purposes as part of a continuum between those of broad strategic importance, such as policy co-ordination, and those purposes, such as information sharing, that may be more practically orientated and limited in potential scope.

Such a continuum is useful in addressing the second focus of this section which is to consider how collaboration could be improved in Chawama, Kamwala and, potentially, other communities. As identified, lack of trust was an issue in the two case study communities and tasks such as information sharing would not require the same degree of trust between organisations that may be needed for more integrated joint delivery or strategic policy co-ordination. The fact that many of the organisations involved in this study came together for the subsequent workshops that followed data collection demonstrates that there is potential for the development of open community forums that allow networking and information sharing between those involved in development work with young people. Drawing on concepts of participatory development as well as practical examples in the literature, Cornwall (2002, p19) recognises that such 'spaces' for discussion may be relatively 'fleeting formations' but they may also be 'sites of radical possibility'.

Whether this potential, and the development of improved collaboration more specifically, would be realised as a result of instigating such open community forums can only be discussed somewhat hypothetically. However, Bowen's (2005) research in Jamaica identified how community discussions on local issues and priorities

subsequently led to deeper collaboration amongst members of community networks. In Chawama and Kamwala, such discussions may enable greater acknowledgement of the different organisations and their aims and approaches in working with young people in communities, a particular issue identified by interviewees as important in instigating collaboration. This would represent the 'storming' phase that Franklin (2009) views as necessary before deeper and more long-standing collaborative relationships can be established. Ultimately, however, more long-standing collaboration would depend in part on the capacity of community organisations to contribute to further collaboration. Not all organisations would be likely to identify that potential benefits from further collaboration would be commensurate to the commitment of scare resources that this would involve. Nevertheless, this does not preclude smaller subgroups of committed organisations pursuing the 'high level' collaboration that was valued in enhancing the delivery of activities for young people in each community.

There remains an issue as to where the initial impetus for establishing local community forums may come from. As institutions comprised of community members but instigated with governmental support, the respective Ward Development Committees appear to be in a potentially ideal position to provide this initial impetus. The contribution of the Chawama Ward Development Committee to the subsequent research dissemination workshop in this community indicates, at least, some commitment to addressing the issues raised in this research. This type of involvement on behalf of the Ward Development Committees may also give greater collaborative weight to their own lobbying of higher level government institutions and other external agencies to provide further resources to support

development work with young people in their communities. Irrespective of the success of this advocacy, as Batley (2006, p250) has commented:

> *At least until government can provide more comprehensive and better services, what needs greatly to be improved is the level of collaboration between government and non-state providers.*

This would certainly represent an important step in enhancing collaborative development work with young people in Chawama and Kamwala.

Notes

(1) The influence of this participatory approach is discussed in further detail elsewhere (Lindsey et al., 2010).

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